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**POLITICAL WRITING IN TIMES OF CRISIS:
THE WORK OF OCTAVIO PAZ, CARLOS FUENTES,
CARLOS MONSIVÁIS AND ELENA PONIATOWSKA,
MEXICO, 1968-1995**

BY

CLAIRE BREWSTER

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Summary

This thesis focuses on the political work of Octavio Paz, Carlos Fuentes, Carlos Monsiváis and Elena Poniatowska as shown through their articles, essays and comments. It analyses their views and seeks to explore how accurately they portrayed domestic politics and the development of Mexican society from 1968 to 1995.

It begins with a brief discussion of the debates surrounding the intellectual's function in Latin America, and Mexico in particular, and includes biographical details of the four writers to identify their different perspectives. This is followed by detailed analyses of their responses to five crucial episodes in contemporary history: the Student Movement of 1968; the relationship between writers and the State during the presidencies of Luis Echeverría Alvarez and José López Portillo after the movement's tragic end; the reactions of Monsiváis and Poniatowska to the development of civil society in the aftermath of the 1985 earthquakes that devastated Mexico City; the 1988 presidential election campaigns and the highly contentious result; the presidency of Carlos Salinas de Gortari, especially the 1994 Zapatista rebellion in the southern state of Chiapas. It investigates the measures taken by the writers to combat government restraints, and the ways in which they defied censorship of the press to ensure that matters of national importance were kept in the public domain.

The study concludes by monitoring the changes in Mexican society during the last thirty years, and assesses if Paz, Fuentes, Monsiváis and Poniatowska accurately reflected this transformation. Rarely cited sources are included to illustrate the political aspects of the writers' work and to provide an understanding of their important roles as opinion-formers. Findings are based upon the wealth of articles and comments that appeared in the Mexican and international press, supplemented by interviews with Monsiváis, Poniatowska, and various academics in Mexico and the United Kingdom.

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Abbreviations

- AIAE Asamblea de Intelectuales, Artistas y Escritores
- CNCA (Conaculta) Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes
- CND Convención Nacional Democrática
- CNH Consejo Nacional de Huelga
- CNOP Confederación Nacional de Organizaciones Populares
- CONAMUP Coordinadora Nacional del Movimiento Urbano Popular
- CTM Confederación de Trabajadores de México
- CUD Coordinadora Unica de Damnificados
- EZLN Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional
- FNCA Fondo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes
- FONAPAS Fondo Nacional para las Actividades Sociales
- GATT General Agreement on Tariffs and Trades
- IFE Instituto Federal Electoral
- IMF International Monetary Fund
- INBA Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes
- NGOs Non-government organisations
- PAN Partido De Acción Nacional
- PIPSA Productora e Importadora de Papel S.A.
- PMS Partido Mexicano Socialista
- PPS Partido Popular Socialista
- PRD Partido de la Revolución Democrática
- PRI Partido Revolucionario Institucional
- PRT Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores
- PST Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores
- PTM Partido Trabajadores Mexicanos
- SEP Secretara de Educación Pública
- TLC Tratado de Libre Comercio de Norteamérica
- UNAM Universidad Nacional Autonomía de México

Introduction

As the content of their novels, short-stories, poetry and essays confirms, Latin American writers feel compelled, either directly or obliquely, to comment upon events of national importance. This thesis provides a comparative study of the political work of Octavio Paz, Carlos Fuentes, Carlos Monsiváis, and Elena Poniatowska during the period 1968 to 1995. Their diverse personal and political perspectives led them to assume a variety of roles: analysers of society, critics of those in office, and figures seeking both to guide and to reflect public opinion. While they shared a Mexico City perspective, they worked in different spheres: Paz concentrating more upon "high" society, directing his opinions at his social and intellectual peers and those with political power. Monsiváis and Poniatowska looked at more popular concerns, articulating issues affecting those on the margins of society. Although they share many beliefs and preoccupations, Monsiváis and Poniatowska used distinct techniques, often addressing different aspects of the same movements. Fuentes occupied the middle ground: like Paz he tried to influence national leaders, but his work also showed strong sympathy for the poor and dispossessed. Between them, the four articulated the concerns of a cross-section of Mexican society. Arguably Mexico's leading social critics, their intellectual contributions were greatly regarded as they chronicled the changes in Mexican society throughout these years. This is not to say that their views were unquestioned: indeed, as will be seen, they were often at the centre of bitter polemics. While fluctuations occurred, it is generally agreed that all four kept a critical distance from those with political power, and their consequent integrity ensured widespread respect. An examination of their essays reveals their maturation as writers; concurrently an understanding is gained of the development of Mexican society. Their work charts, in

microcosm, an important historical era and illustrates how they worked with, and often reacted against, the political establishment.

There have been few investigations of writers as intellectual and social commentators in contemporary Mexico.¹ Roderic Camp has extensively discussed the relationship between Mexican intellectuals and the State.² Nicola Miller's *In The Shadow of the State* is the first comprehensive survey in English of intellectuals in Latin America and their role in the formation of national identities.³ Concentrating upon the period 1920-1970, it has useful sections on Mexico. Jorge Castañeda included a chapter on intellectuals in *Utopia Unarmed* as he traced the development of the Latin American Left in the post-cold war era.⁴ These works, however, are of a broad nature and do not extensively discuss individual writers. General histories of 1968-95 tend to neglect the contribution of those working in the intellectual and cultural fields. Those that do, reflect upon Paz's resignation as Ambassador to India (1968) and provide overviews of the *Excelsior* Affair (1976).⁵ Henry Schmidt analysed the relationship between Cosío Villegas and President Echeverría.⁶ Sergio Zermeño explored the connections between intellectuals and the State in the 1980s. He described President Salinas's strategy of coopting writers, artists and scientists, but provided no specific examples.⁷

Analyses of the four writers' political views tend to assume rather than demonstrate their political beliefs; a close scrutiny of their essays is lacking. The many books about Paz focus upon his poetry; few consider his political articles.⁸ Xavier Rodríguez Ledesma's *El pensamiento político de Octavio Paz*, goes some way to correct this imbalance, but it ends in 1993, on the eve of the Chiapas uprising, an event in which Paz would play an important interpretative role.⁹ Similarly, researchers of

Fuentes generally concentrate on his fiction.¹⁰ Maarten Van Delden examined Fuentes's vision of Mexico as seen through his novels and short stories and included a brief reference to the Chiapas rebellion, with appraisals of Fuentes's political books, *Tiempo mexicano* (1972) and *Nuevo tiempo mexicano* (1994). Although Van Delden discussed the polemics surrounding Fuentes's relationship with presidents Echeverría and López Portillo, he did not extensively consult Fuentes's articles.¹¹ Much has been written about Poniatowska's fiction and testimonial literature,¹² yet there are no detailed studies of her essays. Monsiváis is a prolific author, but there has been little analysis of his chronicles,¹³ and he has been largely overlooked by the non-Spanish speaking world. John Kraniauskas translated six of Monsiváis's articles. In his introduction he described the literary characteristics of Monsiváis's work as occupying an "in-between genre": "the essay (between science and literature) and the chronicle (between historical and fictional narrative)".¹⁴ Concentrating mainly upon cultural criticism, Kraniauskas did not include Monsiváis's political thought and his aspirations for the country. This thesis scrutinises the political journalism that has been an important but neglected aspect of the work of all four writers.

Paz, Fuentes, Poniatowska and Monsiváis have between them published thousands of essays and chronicles in the Mexican press.¹⁵ One reason why this important contribution has been disregarded by academics and critics is self-evident: the task is enormous. It would take years to obtain and analyse all their articles and comments. Moreover, they have all written books outlining their political views. Books are easy to consult and, small readerships notwithstanding, their impact endures far longer than that of items in the press and attracts academic attention. Yet they are subject to space restrictions and are edited with the benefit of hindsight. Paz's *Obras*

completas, for example, span fourteen volumes but contain only a fraction of his political observations and hence portray a sanitised, refined version of his development as a political commentator.¹⁶ The lack of detailed examination of these writers' contributions in the press has left a gap in our understanding of the vital role they undertook in raising awareness about national concerns as they occurred. Crucially, their function in the developing character of these events is diminished by looking exclusively at retrospectively compiled books. Only by surveying their opinions made at the time can their contributions be tested. A close reading of their political essays provides an illuminating insight both of the writers themselves and how they evolved as intellectuals.

It is essential to consider the immediate reactions of the four in tracing their impact upon important national events. Discrepancies and misquotations aside, spontaneous remarks and articles drafted in the heat of the moment most accurately expose the writers' viewpoints.¹⁷ Such an analysis raises important questions that this thesis highlights and attempts to answer. Whom were the writers addressing? What were they trying to achieve by entering the political arena? Were they leading public opinion or responding to it? Have the writers remained true to their convictions or did they subsequently adapt their views to reflect contemporary circumstances? In the words of Cosío Villegas, Mexico's presidential system has created "una monarquía absoluta sexenal".¹⁸ Did the four writers vary their tactics from one president to the next and, if so, how? An examination of the press reveals the extent to which they tried to influence executive political decisions. For the purposes of this thesis the correlation between their opinions and subsequent political actions matters less than the degree to

which they believed that their comments carried weight. Indeed, it would be impossible to measure the former; although, as will be seen, there were at times some causal links.

Hence, the majority of primary sources consulted is taken from the pages of the newspapers and magazines in which their responses were expressed. Recognising that the exact details of many of these articles are little-known and often disputed, this thesis is interspersed with direct quotations to show the writers' committed, but changing and often contradictory, stances. This poses another question: how can contemporary government policy be criticised in the press? This study explores if and how the different forms of censorship have been overcome. Passages of their work are analysed to demonstrate the techniques used to combat government and editorial restraints; and to reveal the different methods employed in directing readers' responses.¹⁹ To meet the challenges raised by these issues an exhaustive search has been made of Mexican periodicals and newspapers. The bulk of the research was conducted in a variety of *hemerotecas* in Mexico D.F., Puebla City, and Pachuca. This primary material is supplemented by interviews with Mexican writers and academics; Monsiváis and Poniatowska provided retrospective opinions of their contributions.

Paz, Fuentes, Poniatowska and Monsiváis have enjoyed high profiles in the Mexican media. Their comments and essays appeared in a variety of publications, depending upon the topics addressed, and the editors' political stances. In 1968, the main outlets for critical discussion were the daily *Excelsior*, and the weekly *Siempre!* with its supplement, *La Cultura en México*. In 1971, Paz was invited by *Excelsior* to direct its monthly cultural magazine, *Plural*. The dismissal of *Excelsior* editor, Julio Scherer García, in July 1976 saw a transformation of the paper's political line. Paz

resigned from *Plural* in protest and founded *Vuelta*, the first edition of which appeared in December 1976; Scherer created the weekly political magazine, *Proceso*. The daily, *Unomásuno*, emerged in 1977 edited by Scherer's former colleague, Manuel Berrera Acosta. Its weekly cultural supplement, *Sábado*, was led by Fernando Benítez until September 1986. In January 1978, *Nexos* was established by Héctor Aguilar Camín. An internal disagreement in *Unomásuno* saw the birth of the daily *La Jornada* in 1984; *Unomásuno* subsequently moved towards the Right. Throughout their existence, *Proceso* and *La Jornada* have been the leading forums of critical political comment; they are increasingly the battlegrounds of heated, often acrimonious, polemics. Monsiváis is the most prolific of the four writers, regularly contributing to *Proceso* and writing a weekly column for *El Financiero*. He was coordinator of *La Cultura en México* for many years, and serves on the editorial committees of both *Nexos* and *Proceso*. Paz's articles were mainly published in *Plural* until 1976 and thereafter in *Vuelta*; his more personal remarks tended to appear in *Proceso* and *La Jornada*. The political work of Fuentes and Poniatowska is more sporadic; their articles are found in a variety of newspapers and magazines across the political spectrum.

The period covered by the thesis is no coincidence: 1968 to 1995 was a crucial time in Mexican political and social development. The Student Movement of 1968 marked the beginning of the slow, faltering, and yet to be completed, path towards democratisation. In common with its Latin American neighbours, Mexico has moved away from authoritarian leadership. In the post- Cold War environment the United States has been less willing to compromise democratic freedom by supporting dictatorships in return for regional stability. In the late 1980s Latin American military regimes slowly gave way to civilian governments. Neoliberal economic reforms and

incorporation within a continent-wide, free-trade zone replaced ideology as the stimuli for inter-American relations and while economic liberalisation alone could not guarantee democracy (Pinochet's Chile being a case in point), global political and economic trends encouraged domestic groups to insist upon democratic change.

While Mexico's economic and political history reflected these general trends, there were noticeable differences from the rest of Latin America. In 1990, Mario Vargas Llosa caused an uproar when he described the Mexican political system as "la dictadura perfecta".²⁰ His observation can be applied in several ways: a "dictatorship" because the basic elements of a political democracy were lacking in a country where election results were predetermined. "Perfect" because although no democracy existed, since its inception in 1929 the single party State constructed such an effective facade of democracy (civilian governments, regular elections, etc.) that it retained a large degree of legitimacy. "Perfect" too because, unlike many military dictatorships, Mexico's civilian version built an element of flexibility into it. Under President Lázaro Cárdenas the party structure incorporated and strengthened its influence upon the union organisations, the middle-classes and the military, ensuring that all important political debate and decisions took place within the system. With access to grass-root organisations, the Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI) was able to monitor and gauge discontent and hardship. During the so-called "economic miracle" from the 1940s to 1960s, import substitution policies swelled the public manufacturing sectors and the flow of State patronage helped to relieve the excesses of an economically polarised society. Piece-meal wage concessions often stifled discontent, while repression remained in the background as a menacing alternative. This balance between cooption and coercion went tragically wrong on 2 October 1968. The victims of the

Tlatelolco massacre were mainly middle-class youths who had taken advantage of the greater access to education to analyse, debate and voice their concerns. Academics, journalists and writers who fostered this free-thinking atmosphere were a potent force in challenging the PRI's claim to be the legitimate guarantor of revolutionary ideals.

Social and economic pressures combined to force changes to Mexico's previous model of political stability. The "economic miracle" and the huge State ownership and patronage it helped to fund was largely due to Mexico's ability to obtain international loans using future oil revenues as security. When world oil prices plummeted in 1982 Mexico was unable to pay its debts. President De la Madrid suspended repayment and came under pressure from the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to adopt a radical economic transformation to reschedule the loans. The price for international help was the destruction of the protective import substitution model in favour of free trade. In 1982 De la Madrid signed the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trades (GATT), marking the beginning of Mexico's incorporation into the free trade world economy; the signing of the Tratado de Libre Comercio de Norteamérica (TLC) was the latest stage.²¹ In such an environment massive State ownership was an anathema, and a wave of privatisation began.

The process of decorporatisation had huge social, economic and political implications. Profits came before politics and led to mass redundancies in the private sector. Concurrently, government cuts on welfare spending removed the safety-net of the past and many unemployed moved to the big cities seeking a living within the informal sector. The important link between State patronage and popular political loyalty was considerably weakened: Mexicans became increasingly beyond the reach of

a State they had always known to be corrupt, but now saw as ineffective. The popular mistrust of politicians and traditional union representatives stimulated a search for an effective, alternative means of voicing discontent.

The growth of Mexican civil society during the 1980s should thus be seen as a combination of the political consequences of economic restructuring and the increased social pressure for change from those who had been shocked into action by the massacre of 1968. Particularly in the aftermath of the 1985 earthquakes, civil society reflected the needs of the many popular movements. Democratic demands increased: the widespread anger following the deeply contested presidential election of 1988 would eventually lead to far-reaching electoral reforms. Significantly, the electoral monitoring body, the Instituto Federal Electoral (IFE), would be given political independence and measures were introduced to create a level playing-field on issues such as electoral spending and access to the media. Few political commentators would suggest that the democratisation process has been completed. Even though the opposition party candidate, Vicente Fox, won the presidential election in July 2000, it is too early to proclaim the establishment of a durable democracy: the remnants of the old patronage system and the corruption it fostered are still evident. During the period 1968-95 the financial resources that many popular movements sought were in the hands of mistrusted politicians. Such groups were left with three choices: to dialogue with politicians and risk becoming coopted; to remain aloof with a strong probability of being ignored; or to find new ways of making their voices heard. The rebellion of the Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional (EZLN) in the remote State of Chiapas in January 1994 is an example of a more extreme means of attracting attention.

Attempting to analyse all the political work of the four writers during a thirty year period would be counter-productive. The proliferation of articles would demand a degree of generalisation that would compromise the aims of a study that relies upon detailed analysis. The writers' emphasis on certain key issues and events has encouraged a specific focus upon particular incidents that challenged the legitimacy of the PRI as the paternal guarantor of revolutionary principles and questioned the nature of political representation. As will be seen, the extent to which each of the four writers contributed to these debates reveals much about their relationships with the Mexican people and the Federal government at the time. Chapter one discusses ties between intellectuals and the State in Latin America and assesses the merits of working within a specific theoretical framework. It examines the case of Mexico since the Porfiriato, censorship in the press, and the personal and political backgrounds of Paz, Fuentes, Poniatowska and Monsiváis. Chapter two addresses the Student Movement of 1968; the abrupt and violent suppression of which was a watershed in the relationship between the Mexican government and its people. The scale of brutality used by the police and Army decisively ended the myth, begun after the Revolution, of the benevolent, paternal State. The four writers were united in their condemnation of President Díaz Ordaz. 'Tlatelolco' has refused to disappear; each anniversary has stimulated further comment. This research illustrates the ways in which its shadow has fallen over subsequent social and political events. Chapter three assesses the four writers' relationship with Díaz Ordaz's successors, Luis Echeverría Alvarez (1970-76) and José López Portillo (1976-82). Paz and Fuentes appeared to overlook Echeverría's involvement in the massacre and tried to work with him to achieve democratic change; Monsiváis and Poniatowska remained detached. Chapter four considers the aftermath of the 1985 earthquakes that

exposed the extent of government corruption and the strength of the Mexican people in overcoming adversity. While not political in origin, the consequences of this natural disaster had profound social and political repercussions. In what Poniatowska believes to be her most important work, she and Monsiváis chronicled the emergence of civil society from the rubble.

In 1988 the strength of Mexican civil society was tested at the polls; chapter five outlines Paz's and Monsiváis's responses to the presidential campaigns and the election results. Following what many interpret as a fraudulent victory for the governing party, Monsiváis resolutely supported the defeated left-wing opposition candidate; whereas Paz praised the triumph of democracy. Both vociferously stated their views in the press. Chapter six examines how President Salinas worked to secure the support of those who had opposed him at the polls and to coopt the intellectual community. These relationships were tested in January 1994 by the Chiapas rebellion. Again force was used against the Mexican people, this time within the spotlight of the world media. Critics of the government who had been conquered by force in 1968, angered by official responses to natural disaster in 1985, and believed they had been cheated by electoral fraud in 1988, used the situation to highlight the contradictions of a government that claimed to protect and support its people. The eloquent Zapatista spokesman, Subcomandante Marcos, challenged Mexican writers to a duel of words that few could resist; the battleground was the Mexican press. All four writers, to varying degrees, took up the gauntlet: the ways in which they did reveal much about the development of their political thoughts since 1968. The collapse of the Mexican peso, the dramatic fall from grace of ex-President Salinas, and the government's decision to re-enter the conflict zone in February 1995, further intensified national indignation and fortified the

strength of civil society, causing the four to reassess their positions and their relationships with the Federal authorities. Finally, the conclusion reviews the opinions and attitudes of the four writers to ascertain if, and how, their views have modified during the last thirty years. It considers whether or not they accurately reflected what was happening in Mexican society. The development of popular representation is measured, and an assessment made of the extent to which these writers have contributed to substantial, lasting change in the political and public spheres.

Notes to introduction

¹ See for example: Martin S. Stabb, *The Dissenting Voice: The New Essay of Spanish America, 1960-1985*, (Austin, 1994). Paz is a dominant force in this study of Latin American essayists; Monsiváis and Fuentes are also included. Poniatowska is barely mentioned although Stabb acknowledged her work "at times approaches essayistic writing". In an undertaking of this scale, Stabb understandably concentrated upon essays reproduced in books. He examined the effect of the Tlatelolco massacre on the work of Paz, Fuentes and Monsiváis as seen in *Posdata* (1970), *Tiempo mexicano* (1972) and *Días de guardar* (1970) respectively.

Jean Franco, "The Critique of the Pyramid and Mexican Narrative After 1968", in Rose S. Minc, (ed.), *Latin American Fiction Today, A Symposium*, (Montclair State College, 1979), pp.49-59. Franco surveyed the political content of Mexican writers' fiction since 1968; reflecting on the Tlatelolco massacre and the *Excelsior* Affair (1976).

Alejandro Toledo y Pilar Jiménez Trejo, *Creación y poder: nueve retratos intelectuales*, (México D.F., 1994). Toledo and Jiménez interviewed eight Mexican intellectuals, and Peruvian Mario Vargas Llosa, about their relationships with those with political power.

² Roderic A. Camp, *Intellectuals and the State in Twentieth Century Mexico*, (Austin, 1985), in particular pp.208-222; Roderic A. Camp, "Intellectuals: Agents of Change in Mexico?", *Journal of Interamerican studies and World Affairs*, No.3, Vol.23, Aug. 1981, pp.297-319; Roderic A. Camp, "The Intellectual in Comparative Perspective: The Case of Mexico", and "Mexican Intellectuals and Collective Biography in the Twentieth Century" in Alistair Hennessy, (ed.), *Intellectuals in the Twentieth Century Caribbean*, Vol. 2, (London, 1992), pp.36-48, 211-224. Using sociological surveys, Camp made a broad study of Mexican intellectuals. He defined who they are, their backgrounds and their relationships with those in power.

³ Nicola Miller, *In The Shadow of the State: Intellectuals and the Quest for National Identity in Twentieth-Century Spanish America*, (London, 1999).

⁴ Jorge G. Castañeda, *Utopia Unarmed: The Latin American Left after the Cold War*, (New York, 1993).

⁵ See, Hector Aguilar Camín and Lorenzo Meyer, (trans. Luis Alberto Fierro), *In The Shadow of the Mexican Revolution*, (Austin, 1994), pp.201-209; Franco, "The Critique of the Pyramid", pp.49-59; Howard Handelman, *Mexican Politics*, (New York, 1997), pp.42-46, 62-63; Kenneth F. Johnson, *Mexican Democracy: A Critical View*, (New York, 1978), pp.1-9, 52-61; Michael C. Meyer and William L. Sherman, *The Course of Mexican History*, (London, 1987), pp. 702-709; Edwin Williamson, *The Penguin History of Latin America*, (London, 1992), pp.402-409, 557.

⁶ Henry C. Schmidt, "The Mexican Intellectual as Political Pundit, 1968-1976: The Case of Daniel Cosío Villegas", *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs*, No. 1, Vol. 24, Feb. 1982, pp.81-103.

⁷ Sergio Zermeño, "Intellectuals and the State in the 'Lost Decade'", in Neil Harvey, (ed.), *Mexico: Dilemmas of Transition*, (London, 1993), pp.279-298. Zermeño's emphasis was upon the State; he did not discuss individual intellectuals.

⁸ Alberto Ruy Sánchez, *Una introducción a Octavio Paz*, (México D.F., 1990). Ruy Sánchez gave a detailed and comprehensive description of Paz's early life; he outlined Paz's political views, although for the period 1970-1990 he focused upon Paz's poetry.

⁹ Xavier Rodríguez Ledesma, *El pensamiento político de Octavio Paz*, (México D.F., 1996).

¹⁰ Among those who have addressed the political impact of Fuentes's fiction are: Steven Boldy, "Carlos Fuentes", in John King, (ed.), *Modern Latin American Fiction: A Survey*, (London, 1987), pp.155-172; W.M. Langford, *The Mexican Novel Comes of Age*, (Indiana, 1972); Wendy B. Faris, *Carlos Fuentes*, (New York, 1983); Raymond Leslie Williams, *The Writings of Carlos Fuentes*, (Austin, 1996); Daniel de Guzmán, *Carlos Fuentes*, (New York, 1972).

Depicting Fuentes as a "historical novelist", Boldy showed how, through his novels, Fuentes illustrated the development of Mexican society and its "racial and cultural diversity". Langford included a discussion of Fuentes's political concerns and his candid comments on domestic and international issues. In a section describing Fuentes's background, Faris outlined his relationship with President Echeverría. Williams provided a biographical sketch of Fuentes and brief details of his relationship with Paz. De Guzmán devoted a chapter to Fuentes's work as a journalist.

¹¹ Maarten Van Delden, *Carlos Fuentes, Mexico, and Modernity*, (Nashville, 1998), especially pp.119-129. Van Delden also commented upon the *Plural* debate, "México 1972: Los escritores y el poder", staged by Paz in which Fuentes defended President Echeverría and Gabriel Zaid accused Fuentes of renouncing his "intellectual independence".

¹² See for example: Beth E. Jørgensen, *Engaging Dialogues: The Writing of Elena Poniatowska*, (Austin, 1994); Cynthia Steele, *Politics, Gender and the Mexican Novel, 1968-1988*, (Austin, 1992); Jean Franco, *Plotting Women: Gender and Representation in Mexico*, (London, 1989), see in particular pp.175-187. Jørgensen described Poniatowska's work as a journalist and her interview techniques. A discussion of *La noche de Tlatelolco* (1971) is included. Steele considered the affiliations between novels and political and social change in Mexico. She measured the effect of the Tlatelolco massacre upon Mexican literature. For her investigation of Poniatowska's work, however, Steele analysed *Hasta no verte Jesús mio*. The book closes by charting the changes in Mexican society following the 1985 earthquakes. Although Monsiváis was not included among Steele's case studies, she acknowledged he is "one of the most incisive analysts of the current social and political scene". Franco, too, focused on Poniatowska's *Hasta no verte Jesús mio* (1969), but praised Poniatowska's "innovative" use of the tape recorder with which she reconstructed the "collective experience" of Tlatelolco. Franco described *La noche de Tlatelolco* as "an answer to the government's silence on the Tlatelolco massacre". Poniatowska's *Fuertes es el silencio* (1980) is, Franco wrote, the story of the "socially and politically marginalised".

¹³ Linda Dee Egan, *Lo marginal en el centro: La crónicas de Carlos Monsiváis*, Ph.D. thesis, University of Santa Barbara, 1993. Taking a literary approach, Egan looked at the "aesthetic, thematic and structural" nature of Monsiváis's works. Her 2,596 page epic ends before the Chiapas rebellion.

¹⁴ John Kraniuskas, (ed.), *Carlos Monsiváis: Mexican Postcards*, (London, 1997), p.xi. That these six articles alone form a book of 200 pages indicates the scale of Monsiváis's work. For Monsiváis's definition of the chronicle see Carlos Monsiváis, *A ustedes les consta*, (México D.F., 1980), pp.17-76.

¹⁵ I have accumulated over two thousand articles and interviews from this period in which the four writers discussed Mexican affairs; my collection is by no means complete. As the years have passed each one has become more prolific. Praising Monsiváis's contribution, Domínguez noted the thousands of pages he has produced, adding that Monsiváis's "complete works" would be overwhelming. See Christopher Domínguez Michael, "Carlos Monsiváis en sus cincuenta años", *Proceso*, No.596, 4 April 1988, p.58.

¹⁶ Octavio Paz, *Obras completas*, (México D.F., 1996). Paz's comments upon the 1988 election, his contribution to the polemics of the early 1990s, and his reaction to the Chiapas rebellion were not included.

¹⁷ The individuals studied here pay great attention to what appears in print and have been quick to indicate inconsistencies between their actual views and those ascribed to them by the media. Monsiváis's weekly column, "Por mi madre, bohemios", for example, comprises annotated selected comments from a variety of people made in all sections of the press. Such careful scrutiny places Monsiváis in the ideal position to monitor items relating to himself. Equally, although they have spent much time away from Mexico, Paz and Fuentes have kept in close touch with events and forward any necessary corrections to, or clarifications of, their purported comments. All four have pointed out misquotations and errors. See, Carlos Fuentes, "Carta al Director de *Novedades*", *La Cultura en México*, No.353, 20 Nov. 1968, p.vi; Octavio Paz, "Nota", *La Jornada*, No.1405, 12 Aug. 1988, p.8; Elena Poniatowska, "Respuesta a Antonio Martín del Campo", *La Jornada*, No.1484, 31 Oct. 1988, p.2; Juan Bañuelos, "Respaldan la petición de otorgar el Premio Chiapas a Marcos", *La Jornada*, No.4034, 30 Nov. 1995, p.2. Carlos Monsiváis, "No firmó documento de apoyo a la candidatura de Marcos al Premio Chiapas", *La Jornada*, No.4035, 1 Dec. 1995, p.2.

Fuentes wrote from Paris objecting to an editorial about his work, political ideas and family history. Paz corrected a misprinted sentence in his article of the previous day. Responding to comments by Martín del Campo, made in *La Jornada*, that she had misrepresented his role following the earthquakes, Poniatowska explained that she did not reply immediately as she was out of the country. On 30 November 1995 Monsiváis's name was listed among those nominating Subcomandante Marcos for the Chiapas prize for literature. The following day, Monsiváis stated that he had not endorsed the proposal.

¹⁸ Daniel Cosío Villegas, *La sucesión presidencial en México*, (México D.F., 1975), p.19.

¹⁹ Given the steady deterioration of the newspapers and the difficulty of obtaining access to them, it is hoped that the excerpts included will make the four writers' contributions to debates more accessible to future academic study.

²⁰ [N.A.], "México es la dictadura perfecta: Vargas Llosa", *Unomásuno*, No.4610, 31 Aug. 1990, p.1. Vargas Llosa explained that Mexico's political party system allowed a limited amount of criticism, but quashed any action deemed to endanger the establishment.

²¹ Handelman, *Mexican Politics*, pp.42-45. In 1970 Mexico's foreign debt was \$4.2 billion; by 1982 it had risen to \$85 billion.

1. Mexican writers and the State

El primer deber del intelectual es hacer luz, despejar las confusiones. Octavio Paz, 1974.¹

The relationship between intellectuals and Latin American States is as complex as the many different nations and political systems that the region comprises. Even focusing upon one comparatively stable country has its complications. In Mexico although the same party has been in power since the 1920s, intellectuals have enjoyed different levels of prestige depending upon the attitude of each president and the prevailing political climate. While Paz stressed that the intellectual should resolve confusion, the term "intellectual" is itself problematic: finding a precise description is the subject of a long ongoing debate. This chapter explores the "definitional minefield",² and considers the intellectuals' varying functions. It assesses the appropriateness of applying generalisations to Latin America and to Mexico in particular, and asks if an analysis of these writers is enhanced or restricted by attempting to apply specific models to them.

What is an intellectual?

Academics have long discussed the character and function of the intellectual. Nicola Miller suggested that the term was used at the start of the twentieth century to describe "novelists, poets, artists, journalists, scientists and other public figures who felt it their moral duty, and their collective right, to interfere directly with the political process through influencing the minds of the nation and moulding the actions of its political leaders".³ Antonio Gramsci's division of intellectuals into two principal groups, "traditional" and "organic" has been given particular attention. Traditional intellectuals,

“put themselves forward as autonomous and independent of the dominant social group”, keeping a critical distance from those in power.⁴ Organic intellectuals work for the State translating its messages to the masses, or alternatively act as spokesmen for their own class, elucidating its needs and aspirations. Michel Foucault added the subdivisions “specific” and “universal”: the former, a “savant or expert” whose knowledge directly relates to a specific subject; the latter, one who exposes abuse of power by applying “the universality of justice and the equity of an ideal law”. Foucault included authors in his “universal” category as “the bearer of values”.⁵ Thus writers create and shape public opinion by measuring events against universal, idealistic benchmarks. Zygmunt Bauman presented intellectuals as “interpreters” and “legislators”. Interpreters ease communication, making declarations accessible to those whose “system of knowledge [is] based on another tradition”. The legislators’ specialist knowledge enables them to make objective “authoritative statements”, deciding which views “become correct and binding”.⁶ Pierre Bourdieu’s *l’intellectuel total* “interferes actively” in political matters.⁷ Jürgen Habermas described intellectuals as “catalysts for change”: they “intervene in the affairs of both state and civil society to represent the new questions as well as their solution”.⁸ Ido Weijers identified the “testifying” intellectual, who defends “the common good” and confronts “a closed public opinion, the invulnerable cynicism of power and the political monopoly of knowledge”.⁹ Roderic Camp counted over twenty definitions of “an intellectual”, and acknowledged that his own would not satisfy everyone: “[One] who creates, evaluates, analyzes, or presents transcendental symbols, values, ideas, and interpretations on a regular basis to a broad audience”.¹⁰

This collective academic effort has its pitfalls. Alain Gagnon compiled a comparative study of intellectuals in seven countries, and concluded:

Intellectuals may be alienated, detached and critical, or they may be integrated into the power structure, performing a supportive and legitimating function for the authorities. Intellectuals may be radical or reactionary or mere exponents of the prevailing wisdom. They may, finally, constitute a cohesive, self-conscious collectivity (an intelligentsia), united by a common commitment to well-defined values, or they may remain a disparate, ill-defined agglomeration of squabbling sages.¹¹

Gagnon's all-encompassing intellectual underlines the problem of faithfully trying to depict one single model from a range of different cultural traditions. As Alan Knight stated, "a term like 'intellectual' can be bandied about, meaning all things to all men".¹² Bauman admitted there are no "objective measurements", adding that they tend to be "self-definitions" made by "the members of the same rare species they attempt to define". Hence intellectuals draw "a boundary of their own identity".¹³

Although differing in detail, the above interpretations stress the essentially active role of the intellectual and perhaps reflecting the element of self-definition, the balance favours a benevolent image of a purveyor of truth and values in political and social life. Is this powerful figure a fair reflection of the Latin American intellectual? Gramsci's focus was upon Italian society in the 1930s and his wider intentions were "uncertain",¹⁴ but such ambiguity has not prevented extensive use of his ideas. Particular attention has been given to his "organic intellectual". In 1955 Karl Mannheim stated, "empathy [...] this faculty of 'seeing someone else's side' [...] distinguishes the modern intellectual from the scholastic variety".¹⁵ Grafting Mannheim onto Gramsci broadens the role of organic intellectuals to those who address the issues and concerns of a lower class while

remaining the instruments of their peers. Ato Quayson explained that the crucial factor is for the class involved to be able to identify with the intellectual who acts as its spokesman.¹⁶ Terry Eagleton described the organic intellectual as “an organizer, constructor, ‘permanent persuader’”, who creates “a two-way passage between political analysis and popular experience”.¹⁷ Foucault agreed that intellectuals have become more sensitive to the values of the masses, claiming they address, “real, material, everyday struggles”.¹⁸ Hence one need not be a member of a class to understand and voice its concerns.

Such is the nature of academic debate that once a mode of thought is dominant it becomes the target of counter-assertions.¹⁹ Weijers decried Bauman’s “interpreter” and “legislator” intellectuals as based upon a narrow view of western politics and its social roles of knowledge and expertise.²⁰ Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak stressed the need to take different contexts into consideration: “when Foucault talks about the universal intellectual, he’s looking at the situation in France”.²¹ R. Radhakrishnan noted that although Gramsci and Foucault had mutual concerns, “they did not live and theorize in the same world”; moreover others have transformed the significance of their work. Hence, “there is a great need to inmix Gramsci with Foucault: to cultivate and elaborate ‘postpolitical’ practices but with reference to the reality of particular histories”.²² Edward Said suggested, “it’s not useful to take [Gramsci’s and Foucault’s intellectual definitions] as absolute positions”.²³ As the theoretical debates gathered momentum in the late 1970s, Raymond Williams issued a salutary warning: “The need for theory keeps pressing on our minds and half-persuading us to accept kinds of pseudo-theory which as a matter of fact not only fail to satisfy us but often encourage us to go on looking in the wrong place and in the wrong way.”²⁴

Intellectuals in Latin America

Miller maintained that only with "careful qualification" could European theories be relevant to Latin America. To illustrate the pitfalls of inappropriate application she noted the tendency to confuse "organic" intellectual with one who supports social revolution. This, she explained, was because Latin Americans came to Gramsci via Louis Althusser who used Gramsci's "loosest formulations" to state his case. In the 1960s and 70s "organic intellectual" was used to define middle class intellectuals who took up the cause of the masses, which was "not at all what Gramsci meant".²⁵ Jorge Castañeda claimed that "theoretical confusion" led to "undue expectations": influenced by Foucault, Claude Lévi-Strauss and Althusser, Europeans saw civil society as tied to the State, whereas in Latin America civil society was undergoing a revival as a separate entity. Castañeda pointed out that the popular campaigns of the 1960s and 70s took place under authoritarian States and hence had to be conducted autonomously; previous governments had incorporated and controlled such groups and would do so again.²⁶ Yet as Néstor García Canclini wrote, "the 'popular' nature of any thing or phenomenon can only be established by the manner in which it is used or experienced, not by where it originates."²⁷ Roberto Schwarz's assessment is revealing:

We didn't invent Romanticism, Naturalism, Modernism, or the car industry, none of which prevented us adopting them. But adopting them did not imply that we reproduced the social system of the countries of origin. So, without losing their original form, literary and scientific schools and Volkswagens expressed local aspirations, whose dynamic, however, was quite different.²⁸

Gramsci rewrote Marx and Lenin; Williams revised and adapted Gramsci stressing the need to move away from the structuralists' emphasis on form and to re-examine literature in its historical and social contexts. Beatriz Sarlo claimed that Williams's

work revolutionised Argentine analyses of intellectuals, writers, and politicians, and inspired intellectuals to transform their societies.²⁹ Gramsci's philosophy made intellectuals aware of their position regarding social movements: were they part of the State or could they become a vanguard? José Aricó underlined the tremendous impact of Gramsci on the Latin American Left: Gramsci was the first Marxist, "que desde la política y la reflexión política parecía hablar para nosotros, los intelectuales". *Prison Notebooks* was published in Latin America in the 1960s and inspired those who had been disheartened by the succession of military coups and the death of "Che" Guevara.³⁰ Latin American intellectuals read foreign theorists and were guided by European Marxism. Through these authors they saw their societies more clearly, questioned their responsibility as intellectuals, and dispersed their views through their essays; the intellectuals then affected radical opinions. As Schwarz stated, the result was something new and Latin American.

F. P. Ellison singled out Latin American writers for their intellectual leadership, stressing "their traditional role as men of uncommon vision" who were "placed at the service of important national and hemispheric causes". He noted that they increasingly worked to effect political change.³¹ In an overview of the region, Castañeda explained that the vacuum of political parties and weak institutions gave intellectuals a "central function" as "keepers of the national consciousness, critics and constant demanders of accountability". He admitted that not all intellectuals have fulfilled this role, but claimed a sufficient number merited the description.³² Addressing political issues and concerns, he continued, has enabled social commentators to become intellectuals. Membership is unlimited: "almost anyone who writes, paints, acts, teaches and speaks out" is eligible. Castañeda sustained that those with overseas experience enrich Latin

American societies. They “import ideologies”, bringing back notions that are applied locally. Castañeda stressed the role of intellectuals in the formation of new political parties, contributing towards university rebuilding programmes, denouncing human rights abuses, combating censorship, and drawing attention to the lack of social justice and widespread poverty. In recent years, he affirmed, the focus of their attention has moved towards representative democracy; some have been “the core of resistance against authoritarian rule”.³³

The case of Chile provides an interesting example of the participation of foreign influenced intellectuals. In the 1960s the government invested heavily in post-graduate studies abroad in economics, sociology and the political sciences. Returning scholars established modern, well-equipped departments in Chilean universities. Keeping a low profile and with the aid of overseas funding, those who remained in the country after the 1973 coup worked to understand the causes of President Allende’s defeat. Intellectuals in exile observed capitalist and socialist systems that would influence their visions of the future direction of Chilean society. Jeffrey Puryear described a ten year “‘learning process’ that was to reshape political thought and rejuvenate civil society”. He maintained that intellectuals played a crucial part in the transfer from military to civilian rule, and became “key figures in the new democratic regime”. Their impact was possible due to “an uncommon combination of training, commitment, initiative and circumstance”.³⁴

The success of the Cuban Revolution inspired a generation of intellectuals. Mario Vargas Llosa recalled, “until then the idea of revolution was romantic and remote to us. [...Cuba] showed that revolution was possible, that a Latin American country

could become a socialist country."³⁵ Intellectuals flocked to Havana to celebrate this manifestation of Latin American nationhood and, as Cuba became increasingly ostracised by the outside world, "intellectuals came largely to substitute for governments and embassies."³⁶ In 1992 Gabriel García Márquez recalled their worth: "Only now can we see how organic we really were, and how useful this whole intellectual support for the Cuban Revolution actually was."³⁷ His use of "organic" illustrates García Márquez's acknowledgement that they were working as ambassadors for the Cuban government.³⁸ As Fidel Castro's administration moved farther towards the Soviet camp, intellectuals began to re-evaluate their position. The Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia was justified by Castro as a "bitter necessity", a stance that loosened ties between many Latin American intellectuals and the Cuban Revolution.³⁹ In 1971 relations were further strained, and in many cases broken, when the Cuban poet, Heberto Padilla, was arrested and charged with writing counter-revolutionary literature. The "Padilla Affair" violated freedom of speech, and previously sympathetic intellectuals urged Castro to return the Cuban Revolution to "what it used to be, [...] a model within socialism". Among them were Fuentes and Monsiváis.⁴⁰

The intellectual in twentieth century Mexico

The intellectual community has an amorphous relationship with the [Mexican] State.
Roderic Camp, 1996.⁴¹

"Organic", "traditional", "interpreter", "legislator", "testifying", "specific", "universal"... the long list of intellectual definitions will continue to occupy academic debate; each is deemed to have a specific function. Foucault himself stated that classifying people subjugates them to that definition.⁴² Is it appropriate, then, to apply

these labels to individual Mexican writers who, at times, have satisfied more than one of those categories?

In an attempt to identify a conclusive Mexican intellectual elite of the 1920s to 1980s, Camp asked Mexican artists, intellectuals and academics to nominate one of their peers. Paz was the overwhelming first choice, with Fuentes second. Monsiváis ranked equal ninth; Poniatowska, the only woman to feature, was in joint twenty-second position.⁴³ The response of Mexican political leaders to the same question was significantly different: Paz was in fourteenth place; Fuentes was twenty-third; neither Monsiváis nor Poniatowska featured.⁴⁴ Evidently the criteria used to judge an intellectual varied considerably between intellectuals and politicians. Moreover, intellectuals do not all see themselves in the same light: Vicente Leñero, who was placed equal thirty-fifth by the intellectuals, claimed he was unsuitable: "I shun the idea of talking literature at all hours of the day and night. [...] I am not versed in philosophy. I don't read foreign books in their original tongue, and the work I have done to earn a living has been of a sort removed from intellectual circles."⁴⁵ In denying membership, Leñero highlighted the intellectuals' remoteness from Mexican reality. Monsiváis, too, resisted inclusion as an intellectual; preferring the title "journalist":

I have worked in the papers since I was seventeen years old. [...] The press pre-dates the opening of public opinion, that's why journalists are more powerful than intellectuals. [...] Intellectuals have difficulty in communicating. They don't have the verbal experience to reach public opinion as a journalist can. [...] They tend to write as if they were presenting papers, [...] most of them are very boring.⁴⁶

Monsiváis stressed the journalist's power of using the printed word to shape accepted values. Yet the two categories are not mutually exclusive. Régis Debry maintained that

journalists are in “direct contact with reality”, but pointed out that the “great intellectuals”, Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Gramsci, also worked as journalists.⁴⁷ Poniadowska, too, described herself as a journalist, although she denied a political agenda: “I don’t consider myself to be a political journalist as I don’t make political commentaries all the time. I write when something causes me great indignation.”⁴⁸

Paz preferred “writer”: “la palabra ‘intelectual’ es muy amplia y abarca a muchas categorías”. He explained, “la eficacia política de la crítica del escritor reside en su carácter marginal, no comprometido con un partido, una ideología o un gobierno”.⁴⁹ In 1981 he clarified, “la función del escritor consiste en limpiar la atmósfera, abrir las ventanas, barrer las telarañas intelectuales y tratar de pensar con modestia y con verdad”.⁵⁰ Ten years later, Paz remained ambivalent about the classification, but was more positive regarding the intellectual’s function: “La palabra ‘intelectual’ no me agrada. Prefiero otras: escritor, científico, artista, filósofo. Pero los intelectuales constituyen una categoría social. [...] La reforma de la nación es impensable sin los intelectuales.”⁵¹ Paz believed that intellectuals perform an important part in the advancement of their countries. He maintained “literature expresses society; by expressing it, it changes, contradicts, or denies it. By portraying it, it invents it; by inventing it, it reveals it.”⁵² This role may extend beyond the confines of literary contribution. Fuentes underlined the intellectuals’ obligation: “In a continent like Latin America, with countries characterised by weak civil society, the intellectual finds exaggerated responsibilities foisted upon him. He is transformed into a [...] redeemer of his society in the absence of the functions that civil society should fulfil.”⁵³ Author Carmen Boullosa voiced her compulsion to comment upon matters of national importance.⁵⁴ Similarly, José Emilio Pacheco acknowledged, “cuando algo terrible o

grandioso sucede en México es como un presagio para la literatura mexicana."⁵⁵ The lack of open public debate has converted authors into moral guides and political reformers.⁵⁶

If Mexican writers are to fulfil the role of independent critic and commentator what avenues are open to them? Paz described the Mexican State as a philanthropic ogre, an evocative image that emphasises the ambivalence with which the governing authorities apportion patronage and constraint: "Los mexicanos hemos vivido a la sombra de gobiernos alternativamente despóticos o paternales pero siempre fuertes."⁵⁷ Functioning within the contradictory facets of the philanthropic ogre is a complex and elaborate art. Individual intellectuals who attempt to maintain their political integrity tread a lonely, sometimes dangerous path. Paz claimed that intellectuals have a duty to be "the critical conscience of the people".⁵⁸ For this to be possible, they must be free to question the political system. Xavier Rodríguez Ledesma stated that those in power have a basic preoccupation to foster a working relationship with intellectuals. He explained that politicians do not always listen to their consciences, but underlined the intellectuals' ability to influence public opinion. Political and cultural magazines have provided the opportunity to create and sustain "expectativas, anhelos y problemáticas 'artificiales' en los grandes sectores sociales".⁵⁹ Paz himself proclaimed that intellectuals could be useful inside the government, provided they kept their distance from those with power.⁶⁰ George Philip was optimistic:

Intellectual dissent or the promotion of new ideas, forcefully articulated in local periodicals which have a guaranteed elite readership, can influence policies. [Intellectuals] can also encourage divisions within the system and also reveal - thereby undermining - various manipulative ploys to which the system has resorted.⁶¹

Philip perceived intellectuals to be a considerable force. Were there spaces within the system for intellectuals to influence decisions? The answer perhaps depended upon the dominant faction within the political system at the time. Monsiváis illustrated the highly personalised nature of "el presidencialismo": one person alone chose governors and secretaries, and nominated his successor. Anticipating Vargas Llosa's "perfect dictatorship", Monsiváis acknowledged the supreme power of the Mexican president.⁶² Each president had his own attitude towards intellectuals, hence writers had to be flexible if they were to make sustained contributions towards political and social debates. As will be seen, different measures were taken to accommodate the ogre's whims and moods.

A brief survey of the history of relationships between politicians and intellectuals reveals the difficulties in balancing the desire for independence against the need for State recognition. During the presidency of Porfirio Díaz intellectuals held an almost marginal position, "reverenciados en ocasiones, pero jamás tomados en cuenta como punto de vista".⁶³ Miller cited Daniel Cosío Villegas's comment that Díaz was "allergic to anything intellectual", but stated that he nonetheless used the *científicos* to support his rule.⁶⁴ Although the term was yet to be conceived, the *científicos* acted as the organic intellectuals of the bourgeoisie, presenting "the kind of ideology it needed to develop and believe in its own class consciousness". Yet James Cockcroft noted the contribution to the Revolution of "middle-class intellectuals", among them Francisco Madero, and the "intellectual proletariat", whose ambitions had been thwarted by the *científicos*. Lacking other opportunities, some intellectuals turned to opposition politics and many worked as journalists.⁶⁵ Intellectual divisions were neither static, nor based upon generational lines: some *científicos* began to criticise Díaz particularly after

1906.⁶⁶ In 1909 the Ateneo de la Juventud was formed with Justo Sierra as its patron. Sierra had “officiated as the high priest of the liberal *patria* during the last decades of the Porfiriato”.⁶⁷ By 1912, under the leadership of José Vasconcelos, the Ateneo had become a fertile ground for political action in support of Madero.

The role played by intellectuals in the Revolution is subject to debate: Cockcroft concluded that intellectuals “were critically important figures”;⁶⁸ whereas Miller found no evidence to support this claim.⁶⁹ Alistair Hennessy maintained they played a “marginal” part, unlike the “key role” of intellectuals in revolutions elsewhere.⁷⁰ Their function in its aftermath is less contended. In 1916 La Sociedad de Conferencias y Conciertos was founded by Los Siete Sabios to preserve and improve the work of the Ateneo. Some of its members would become instrumental in the Secretaría de Educación Pública (SEP). President Obregón propelled intellectuals to the centre of political life. The cultural nationalism that was promoted in the 1920s by SEP Secretary, Vasconcelos, encouraged intellectuals to participate in the creation of a new Mexican identity.⁷¹ Miller pointed out, however, that intellectuals who believed they could participate in the revolutionary process were “mistaken”.⁷² What took place was a continuation of the pattern of the Porfiriato. Although the novels of Mariano Azuela (*Los de abajo*, 1916), and Martín Luis Guzmán (*El águila y la serpiente*, 1926; *La sombra del caudillo*, 1929) depicted the violence and futility of the Revolution, Camp pointed out that the limited readership of books meant the State could afford to give its writers a degree of autonomy.⁷³ Conversely the artists’ murals that adorned the walls of public buildings for all to see, illustrated the close ties between intellectuals and the revolutionary government. In 1959 Juan Soriano condemned the scenes depicted as propaganda: “I’ve never seen [...] a mural against social conditions that actually exist.

[...] They painted what had already happened and what wouldn't get them into trouble. But have they painted anything against the actual government?"⁷⁴ Soriano underlined the crucial issue concerning links between intellectuals and the State: the muralists depended upon State patronage, hence could rarely afford to express anything other than an endorsement of official policies. As Hennessy noted, the artists' "free hand" ceased in 1924 when Vasconcelos's political influence ended.⁷⁵ Once Vasconcelos had served his purpose the machinery of power was employed to outmanoeuvre him: in 1929 President Emilio Portes Gil gave partial autonomy to the National University in a probable attempt "to sow confusion among the student support base of independent presidential candidate Vasconcelos".⁷⁶

In the 1920s "the Mexican State pursued a divide and rule policy toward intellectuals". President Calles categorised intellectuals into those of "good" and "bad" faith. Intellectuals were left with the choice of incorporation or marginalisation.⁷⁷ The domination of political and cultural life was sealed: middle class sectors, the military, campesinos and workers were absorbed into the paternal single-party State that promised unity and stability after two decades of violence and civil war. Any opposition deliberately took place within the strong central party structure, thus ensuring it retained power. By the 1940s intellectuals either followed State guidelines or were largely ignored. There was some flexibility, albeit within "unspoken but well-understood limits".⁷⁸ Lorenzo Meyer underlined the government's ability to conciliate potential opponents:

[The] PRI has room for both Marxists and classical liberals. [...] The thousands of jobs available [...] every six years provide adequate reward for those co-opted. [...] From its support of the Marxist "Mexican Schools of Painting" to its support of the universities, the State has provided a living for

thousands of intellectuals, and its embassies are full of writers and social scientists.⁷⁹

Coercion and cooption, the mainstays of the post-revolutionary system, reach beyond the political arena. Whereas Paz and Monsiváis agree that Mexican intellectuals have failed in their role as independent critics of politics and society, they differ sharply over the cause: Paz censured intellectuals for analysing society within a narrow, leftist ideological framework, while Monsiváis blamed State control and the intellectuals' desire for financial security for their lack of constructive contribution.⁸⁰ Castañeda emphasised how the vast resources of government institutions afford a virtual monopoly of the cultural world. The profusion of national literary prizes, ambassadorships, and other official positions facilitates government control.⁸¹ Vargas Llosa explained that those in power incorporated writers by subsidising them. He claimed that the Mexican State has a history of impeding and inhibiting its intellectuals.⁸² In 1992, illustrating perhaps the influence of Bauman and Gramsci, Paz stressed the Mexican tradition of viewing an intellectual, "no como un crítico del poder sino como su intérprete y su vocero".⁸³ In 1994 Castañeda stated, "podía decirse que el intelectual en México no existe. No es que no abunden incontables escritores [...] que hacen su trabajo y crean obras notables. [...] Pero significa que la verdadera sanción social, el sello final de aprobación y legitimidad, sólo lo otorga el Estado."⁸⁴ Emphasising that his independence was gained from contracts and employment abroad, Castañeda argued that any intellectual who is financially tied to the government cannot fulfil a critical role. Such individuals have to think twice before biting the hand that feeds them.

Meyer's image of a coopted intelligentsia legitimising the single-party State neatly fits the views of those advocating the application of State hegemony in Mexico.

Williams stressed Gramsci's emphasis on the need to create an alternative hegemony to counter the domination of the State;⁸⁵ yet, as Florencia Mallon pointed out, in Mexico "counterhegemonic notions are partially incorporated into a system of rule in order to legitimize or stabilize it".⁸⁶ Thus the governing power has been able to maintain "the illusion of self-government on the part of the populace."⁸⁷ Terdiman suggested such a situation "ensure[s] the continuity of the established order in an automatic way. Those dominating the system could be confident that, left on its own, it would reproduce the conditions by which such domination is made possible."⁸⁸ In 1968 the State acted in a way that questioned its legitimacy to dominate, placing intellectuals and academics in a dilemma. Mary Kay Vaughan portrayed how the official version of the PRI as a benevolent, paternal power was contested: "Revisionist inquiry into Mexican revolutionary history saw the central state as a principal actor and effective manipulator of the masses."⁸⁹ Many intellectuals reassessed their relationship with the State and where their future responsibilities lay. It was at this critical juncture in politics and society, that Gramsci's thoughts on hegemony were being distributed in Mexico.⁹⁰ Gramsci revealed how intellectuals who were coopted by the State maintained the PRI's power. Those who acted outside it, however, could offer alternative readings of history, using language to counter this hegemony.

Aricó underlined the impact of Gramsci's work upon Mexican education and left-wing politics: "La presencia del pensamiento de Gramsci [...] es muy fuerte y ha desplazado algunas corrientes del marxismo que alcanzaron en su momento una expansión desconocida en otras partes." In September 1978 Juan Carlos Portantiero presented a paper entitled "Los usos de Gramsci" at the Universidad Nacional Autonomía de México (UNAM); three years later his book was published. Portantiero

stressed, "se me ocurre que el uso de las categorías gramscianas de análisis aparece como absolutamente pertinente entre nosotros".⁹¹ Arnaldo Córdova emphasised that by the mid-1970s Gramsci had a great influence upon Mexican perceptions:

Sus grandes conceptos y preocupaciones (sociedad civil, sociedad política, hegemonía, [...] etc.) fueron convirtiéndose en referentes teóricos indispensables en el estudio de la nación mexicana y de su historia. Mientras las modas intelectuales llegaban y se iban, [...] Gramsci permaneció en México.

Aricó concluded that Gramsci's role in redefining Mexico was important if not vital.⁹² Reflecting this trend, in 1978 Monsiváis wrote of the possibility of Mexico experiencing "algo parecido" to Gramsci's civil society. In "The Philanthropic Ogre", Paz wrote, "'Civil society' has almost completely disappeared: nothing and no one exists outside the state." In 1971 Fuentes spoke of establishing a strong Mexican civil society, and used the term freely after 1980.⁹³ Whether or not these adaptations were "valid", Gramsci was clearly read and his work spread within the country. In this sense, Paz, Fuentes, Monsiváis, and to a lesser extent Poniatowska, were acting as interpreters: taking a theory and relating it to others. They were writing for a wide audience: their peers, politicians and the Mexican public. Not all their readers would be familiar with the current academic debates, but the cultural, theoretical signposts were visible to those who looked for them, providing a wider context. Those who were unaware of Gramsci were given a point of reference from which to understand the important societal changes that were occurring. Thus a foreign theory was adopted to explain local conditions and to express local aspirations.⁹⁴

Yet recognising that they were aware of, and sometimes used, Gramscian models of representation does not justify analysing their own work through the same

theoretical microscope. As Alan Knight suggested, labels and concepts are worthwhile only if "they provide the machinery for making sense of concrete examples".⁹⁵ In the absence of empirical material, abstract debates may shed light upon these four writers; yet it is surely more accurate to examine their actual words and actions at the time they were made. The recent debate among a new generation of cultural historians about popular resistance reflects a similar dilemma. Questioning previous approaches that interpret events purely by economic or political criteria, they suggested that issues such as space, identity, ritual and gender were equally important to subaltern groups. To understand how, concepts such as discourse and hegemony have been employed to arrive at a better understanding of individual and collective actions.⁹⁶ In response, Eric Van Young noted:

Even aside from a certain self-conscious tendency to overly long methodological and theoretical prolegomena because we are perhaps not sure of our own ground, and even apart from a fascination with labyrinthine postmodern cultural studies, the genre of cultural history may tend somewhat toward navel-gazing, as is often remarked even by its own advocates. [...] It may be of interest to ask of the new cultural history, how new is "new", and is it the newness of the emperor's new clothes?"

He asked if such investigation was useful, or led to confused understandings of Mexican culture and society.⁹⁷ Categories and hypotheses may inform, but should not rule analyses. Far from attempting to add a new definition to an already extensive collection, I concentrate upon the contribution of four writers, two of whom deny being intellectuals (although all are deemed to be so). As I found to my cost, their essays and comments published in an ever-expanding press have provided a surfeit of empirical data, evidence that merits a study in its own right. Rather than be concerned with what type of intellectual each of the four may be, have been or might become, or what

theoretical mould their work happens to fit at any particular time, I focus upon their essays and comments: the concrete examples of the efforts they have made to shape and understand the society around them. It is surely the optimum method of assessing their function. These four writers were aware of international events and the accompanying academic debates, but above all they were addressing Mexicans in Mexico about Mexican affairs of national importance. As opposed to joining or rejecting the discussion of the emperor's clothes, I dust off the unworn outfits in his wardrobe, examining in detail a hitherto neglected aspect of the contribution of four Mexican writers. The result, ironically, may provide material on which future tailors can work.

As stated above, Mexican writers discuss issues such as social justice and poverty, yet many intellectuals are poorly qualified to address the needs of the Mexican public. Poniadowska stressed, "no es lo mismo pensar con el estómago lleno que con el estómago vacío."⁹⁸ Camp emphasised that despite being charged with defining the rules of society, "intellectuals do not necessarily represent a society's culture or reflect its value systems [...] the majority of intellectuals are urban-based, male, exposed to foreign influences, and hence unconcerned or ignorant of rural problems."⁹⁹ Moreover Camp ascertained that since 1920 the majority of intellectuals have belonged to the middle and upper classes, and live in Mexico City, alienated from the provinces.¹⁰⁰ Camp could have been even more specific: intellectuals tend to live in the suburbs of Coyoacán and San Angel, neighbourhoods that are a world apart from the metropolis as a whole. Miller accepted that intellectual activity often involves "a perverse relationship to reality".¹⁰¹ In 1990 Enrique Krauze stated that the reason is "muy sencilla": most Mexican intellectuals, "entreven la realidad a través de las ideologías y no de la investigación empírica".¹⁰² While accepting the existence of an "intellectual

aristocracy" that lives isolated in its own privileged world, Poniatowska noted that others, "Carlos Fuentes, Carlos Monsiváis of course, have reflected moments and instances of the poorest people of Mexico. They write about them and are preoccupied by them."¹⁰³

If intellectuals are to reach the poorest sectors of society, through what means and in which language should they address them? In 1978, Arturo Warman claimed, "there is no real contact between magazines and the reality of the Mexican situation. [...] The intellectual review in Mexico has become a closed universe with intellectuals discussing their views and those of other intellectuals."¹⁰⁴ Literary and cultural magazines are expensive and beyond the reach of many Mexicans. The intellectual has a better opportunity of reaching a broader audience by using the mass media. It is in this context that Monsiváis claimed, "journalists are more powerful than intellectuals".¹⁰⁵ As will be seen, between the years 1968 to 1995 newspapers and cultural supplements have increasingly been used by intellectuals to voice their views and concerns. Yet given that the State has tolerated intellectual criticism due to its small readership, does the relationship change when intellectuals attempt to leave their ivory towers and establish links with wider sectors of society?

Censorship in the Mexican press

Why must [Latin American writers] be reformers, politicians, revolutionaries, moralists? The answer lies in the social conditions of Latin America. [...] Problems which constitute the closest daily reality for people are not discussed and analysed in public, but are usually denied and silenced. [...] The social and political establishment exercises a strict censorship of the media. Mario Vargas Llosa, 1978.¹⁰⁶

As Vargas Llosa noted, the prevalence of government censorship in Latin America has compelled writers to seek new means of expressing their political opinions. Vargas Llosa was describing a time when dictatorships were common in the region, but his comments can be applied to Mexico during the period 1968 to 1995. Although authors of books may have greater space for manoeuvre, such freedom is conditional and the threat of censorship is ever-present. Poniatowska explained, "I write when something causes me great indignation, and it's generally better to write political books, but it's very difficult to do so in this country". She was herself kept under surveillance while compiling her first political book, *La noche de Tlatelolco*.¹⁰⁷ The problems of censorship are multiplied when figures such as Poniatowska and Monsiváis venture into their preferred genre of journalism. Héctor Aguilar Camín observed that newspaper editors are subjected to more scrutiny than book publishers,¹⁰⁸ while Castañeda emphasised that "general harassment and intimidation" of the media has been "a distinctive feature of the antidemocratic drift" in Latin America.¹⁰⁹ Is it feasible, therefore, to submit articles critical of official policy for publication in Mexican newspapers? Can those who choose to print their work in this media, and thereby reach a wider audience, overcome government restraints?

Although Mexico has no official censorship policy, the government retains a tight control of what appears in the press. In 1935, President Cárdenas created the Productora e Importadora de Papel S.A. (PIPSA) to guarantee a regular supply of

newsprint at a reasonable cost. With a 90 per cent share of the company, the State has often used PIPSA as a means of controlling the direction of newspapers.¹¹⁰ As discussed in chapter three, in 1976 the government orchestrated the take-over of *Excelsior* when it was deemed to be too critical of official policy. PIPSA refused to supply newsprint to its weekly successor, *Proceso* until the end of President Echeverría's term of office. In addition, as Poniatowska explained, "newspapers are a business for the rich people and thus their interests have to be defended".¹¹¹ State advertising is an important revenue, and it has been a "common tactic" to withhold or threaten to remove such revenue.¹¹² Monsiváis emphasised, "it is not convenient to offend the principal sponsor".¹¹³ In 1982, President López Portillo withdrew government advertising from *Proceso* claiming that the magazine was using government funds to oppose him. As Camp explained, this is a regular occurrence: Mexico thus allows "dissent but controls its level and tone".¹¹⁴

Control of what is printed is not only restricted to governments and newspaper owners: journalists themselves often avoid sensitive topics. Poniatowska explained, "many journalists exercise self-censorship. [...] There are many relationships between journalists and those in power, and friends of those in power and they won't write against them."¹¹⁵ Ties between Mexican intellectuals and politicians are commonplace, as Camp noted: "many of them were acquainted with one another, even to the extent of having intimate friendships".¹¹⁶ Others exercise self-censorship through the fear of physical harm. Monsiváis drew attention to the "terrorist campaigns" of extreme right-wing groups whose action is ignored by the authorities. In such a climate "official censorship has been relaxed, it can afford to be".¹¹⁷ The disappearance and deaths of many investigative journalists bear witness to a policy of intimidation and restraint. In

1991 Poniatowska spoke of “una mayor censura, una mano dura disfrazada”. She explained, “puedes decir que en México no hay censura hasta que te matan [...] ésa es la censura”.¹¹⁸ During the period 1969-89, forty-seven journalists were killed.¹¹⁹ In early 1994, contributors to *La Jornada* were subjected to threats, and accused of acting as spokesmen for the Zapatista rebels.¹²⁰ The following year, the house of José Emilio and Cristina Pacheco was attacked; both have addressed sensitive issues in their journalistic work.¹²¹

In addition, intellectual battles have hampered efforts to discuss matters of broader concern. Paz illustrated how their world has increasingly become politicised: “Intellectuals are closely related to ideologies, criticism, and in recent years, they have become more and more political.”¹²² This has inevitably led to disparities and arguments. Paz explained the nature of the rift and indicated the depth of the conflicts: “For intellectuals, politics has replaced ideology and to some extent religion. [...] These are religious wars and also personal wars.”¹²³ Camp pointed out that such differences of opinion have adversely affected the intellectuals’ role as critics of State policy:

Intellectuals appear to be far worse culprits than the government in effectively censoring their own kind through group domination of various journals and newspapers. [...] Furthermore, the continuation of this informal censorship among intellectual groups emphasizes and exacerbates differences among the intellectuals, thus weakening their collective voice for change and making them more susceptible to government exploitation.¹²⁴

Allegiance to Mexican journals is generally strong, although in 1980 Poniatowska refuted the suggestion that “dos mafias” had emerged (under Paz in *Vuelta* and Monsiváis at *La Cultura en México*) as “Mafia” implied a monopoly and authors tended to contribute to many publications.¹²⁵ Whereas Camp warned that inter-group

wrangles endangered the intellectuals' ability to bring about change, Castañeda perceived a more personal competition: "Intellectual debates in Latin America are often a contact sport: much is at stake. [...] Debates over funding, protégés, jobs, and perks are savage, frequent, and consuming; their ferocity has earned them the label 'cannibalistic'."¹²⁶

Given these restraints, can intellectuals perform useful roles and spread their messages to a wider audience? As Poniatowska emphasised, careless editing has opened spaces for critical comment:

In newspapers like *Novedades*, they say one thing on one page, then the complete opposite on another. The same newspaper can give totally contradictory information on the same day if it's not well produced or doesn't have a good editorial chief or head of information. Information slips in and suddenly a newspaper that's of the Right appears to be on the Left because no-one has taken the trouble to proof-read it.¹²⁷

Poniatowska's work for *Novedades* appears in the cultural section, where it is perhaps easier to "slip in" political statements than on the front pages. As will be seen, Poniatowska directs her readers to agree with her own, usually unspoken, view. Her celebrity status gives her an instant, wide audience, increasing the strength of her words.

Although restricted access to evidence presents a further obstacle for political journalists, Monsiváis revealed a means of overcoming it. He stressed that there is no Freedom of Information Act in Mexico; the 1977 constitutional amendment to incorporate a right of information is ambiguous and, "means nothing". The government is not bound to reveal the contents of political material. Without proof of corruption, Monsiváis continued, journalism "degenerates into rumour and satire".¹²⁸ Monsiváis

was surely applying irony of his own here. As will be seen, humour and satire play important roles in his work, he has used them as powerful weapons against serving presidents. Similarly, Camp stressed that cartoons are "a vehicle for social ideas and for fighting traditional customs, prejudices and taboos".¹²⁹ As will be shown, the power of the visual image often precludes the need for words as a means of political expression and protest.

As stated above, the four writers discussed in this thesis are, above all, individuals. Since 1968 they have been leading public figures. Although their work discloses their political and personal affiliations, it is useful to provide brief biographical details to illustrate why they responded as they did and to assess if their views and attitudes have substantially changed.

Octavio Paz (31 March 1914-19 April 1998)

Pero saber lo que piensa Octavio Paz hay que leer lo que escribe Octavio Paz. Octavio Paz, 1972.¹³⁰

Hace treinta y cinco años no había en él menor asomo de arrogancia. Elena Poniatowska, 1990.¹³¹

The strong liberal tradition of his family, Paz claimed, follows that of the history of Mexico. His grandfather fought against the French invading forces and was an advisor to President Porfirio Díaz before the latter became a dictator. Paz's father supported the Zapatistas during the Revolution.¹³² Born in 1914, Paz witnessed Mexico's faltering transition from revolutionary violence to comparative political stability and wanted to be a part of that process: "De joven quise ser revolucionario, héroe, fusilado, libertador."¹³³ Much of his childhood was spent in the family home in Mixcoac where

Paz passionately read the books in his grandfather's library. His interest in poetry was born there.¹³⁴

Paz lived outside Mexico for many years giving him a global perspective on national affairs. As a child Paz spent eighteen months in the United States, an experience that left him feeling a foreigner in both countries. After completing his formal education, he visited Yucatán where he discovered that Mexico is not one country but several, with many different cultures.¹³⁵ Paz became involved in the formulation of literary journals, founding and coordinating *Barandal* (1931-32), contributing to *Cuadernos del Valle* (1933-34),¹³⁶ and writing articles for the Argentine magazine, *Sur*.¹³⁷ He co-edited *Taller* (1938-1941) which became a forum for exiled Spanish authors.¹³⁸

In his youth, Paz's political leaning was towards the Left. His poem, "¡No pasarán!", written in 1936, discussed the possibility of war in Spain; proceeds from its publication were donated to the Frente Popular Español en México.¹³⁹ In 1937, Paz visited Spain as a socialist delegate;¹⁴⁰ indeed, he supported the Soviet regime until 1950 when he spoke out against its use of concentration camps.¹⁴¹ Paz, however, denied that his views had substantially changed and in 1977 dismissed reports of "anti-communism". He emphasised, "Paz no ha sido nunca anticomunista pero es, desde hace mucho, un enemigo de la burocracia que ha convertido a la URSS y a otros países 'socialistas' en ideocracias totalitarias".¹⁴² Abhorrence of bureaucracy and totalitarianism have heavily influenced Paz's political criticism.

As a young writer Paz claimed he developed the tenacity to “swim against the tide”,¹⁴³ but the effort had a great personal cost. His first book, *Luna silvestre* (1933), was criticised as “intimista”. In 1937 Paz was discarded as a poet, “¡No pasarán!” was described as “un trabajo eminentemente retórico de izquierda”.¹⁴⁴ By 1943, Paz felt compelled to leave Mexico; likening the experience to withdrawing from himself.¹⁴⁵ He was also perhaps rejecting the constraints of a society that threatened to mould him in a different form.

When Paz returned to Mexico, nine years later, he claimed he was, “otra poeta, otro escritor”.¹⁴⁶ Alberto Ruy Sánchez described this period as Paz’s “formulación madura”. *Libertad bajo palabra*, a collection of poems, was published in 1949, and *El laberinto de la soledad*, his comment upon Mexican life, in 1950. In the latter Paz reflected upon the Mexican consciousness, declaring, “my thoughts are not concerned with the total population of our country, but rather a specific group made up of those who are conscious of themselves, for one reason or another, as Mexicans”.¹⁴⁷ Paz also wrote short-stories and numerous essays discussing art, philosophy, literature and politics. He became “una de las personalidades más activas de la cultura nacional, introduciendo en ella nuevos escritores del extranjero, o viendo desde un nuevo ángulo a los pintores y escritores de México”.¹⁴⁸ Poniatowska remembered meeting Paz in 1955:

A todos estimulaba entre risas y juegos. [...] Carlos Fuentes sentía por él una devoción ilimitada. [...] Paz, generoso, estaba dispuesto a encontrar el talento en todos. ¡Cuánta simpatía en sus ojos, cuánta atención afectuosa a cualquiera de nuestras babosadas!¹⁴⁹

Poniatowska depicted an environment in which those who were to become leading cultural figures supported and stimulated each other. Paz and Fuentes had enjoyed a

close relationship since meeting in Paris in 1950; they worked together at the *Revista Mexicana de Literatura*. Paz recollected the challenge of these days:

Cuando regresé me encontré con un grupo de intelectuales anclados todavía en dogmas que ya en aquella época [...] eran absolutamente estériles: el realismo socialista, el nacionalismo, etcétera. Pero frente a ellos había ya un grupo disperso de jóvenes, de modo muy notable Carlos Fuentes. Se convirtieron en mis aliados y en mis amigos y juntos iniciamos una tentativa por cambiar la vida literaria y artística de México. [...] Intentamos renovar, abrir ventanas, dar a conocer movimientos, obras, valores que eran ignorados en México.¹⁵⁰

Paz depicted Mexican culture as divided between young and old. Identifying with the former, Paz attempted to transform the literary scene, but the enthusiasm for change proved to be insufficient to combat the strength of the established intellectual world. In 1991, he recalled that it been an unhappy return; moreover he perceived that it marked the beginning of a long conflict with other intellectuals: "No fui aceptado, salvo por algunos jóvenes. Había roto con las ideas estéticas, morales y políticas predominantes y no tardé en ser atacado por mucha gente demasiado segura de sus dogmas y prejuicios. Fue el principio de un desacuerdo que todavía no termina."¹⁵¹ Unable to persuade Mexican society to accept his ideas, in 1959 Paz again retreated from the country distancing himself from its perceived dogmas and prejudices. He stayed away for twelve years.

In 1962 Paz accepted President Adolfo López Mateos's invitation to become Ambassador to India, because, "como la mayoría de los intelectuales mexicanos" he had faith in the government and believed that he should promote the legacy of the Revolution and improve international relations.¹⁵² At home, however, the legacy of the Revolution was being severely tested: in 1958 López Mateos ordered his Minister of

Interior, Gustavo Díaz Ordaz, to crush the railway workers' strike and imprison its leaders. The muralist David Alfaro Siqueiros was incarcerated for six years after decrying this repression. Independent trades unions were discouraged. In 1962, campesino leader Rubén Jaramillo was murdered along with his family; according to Enrique Krauze this took place, "with the agreement of the President".¹⁵³ After the Cuban Revolution, and under pressure from the United States, the Mexican business sector and the Catholic Church, López Mateos moved towards the Right.¹⁵⁴ Although Paz claimed to be in tune with other intellectuals in 1962, Nicola Miller pointed out that when Paz became ambassador "intellectuals were actively organising opposition to the regime". Their demand was democracy.¹⁵⁵ Paz, nonetheless, clearly judged that he had a role to play within government and remained in India until his resignation in October 1968.

During this time Paz's status as a poet grew within Mexico and people were increasingly inclined to accept his views of society. When Paz returned to the country in 1971 he was more strongly placed to state his own terms. He and Fuentes conceived a plan jointly to publish a cultural magazine. Paz recalled the scheme: "Queríamos una revista hispanoamericana, hecho por hispanoamericanos, que expresase nuestras particularidades." *Libre* was born in September 1971. As the number of contributors grew, Paz withdrew from the project because he could not agree with the diversity of views. It was with apparent satisfaction that Paz described the fate of *Libre*: "Salieron cuatro números y desapareció sin pena ni gloria." The magazine failed, Paz concluded, because Fuentes had involved too many people in its production.¹⁵⁶

Paz then founded *Plural*, a monthly cultural magazine affiliated to *Excélsior*.¹⁵⁷ Rather than embrace the broad range of viewpoints fostered by *Libre*, the *Plural* board comprised a small team of like-minded people. Its aims were clear: "ser un sitio de reunión de la imaginación creadora y del pensamiento crítico".¹⁵⁸ It is more than a little ironic that the formation of the new journal was a result of Paz's resistance to the plurality of ideas expressed in *Libre*. Ilan Stavans illustrated the peculiar leaning of Paz's magazine:

[It] never includes a correspondence section where ideas can be freely exchanged and left-wing writers [...] are generally excluded from its pages. Paradoxically, dogmatism is not only attacked but practiced in its pages: views differing from Paz's and the staff are pushed aside and ridiculed, never debated.¹⁵⁹

Paz's notion of plurality lay within specific, restricted limits.

Plural marked the beginning of a long association between Paz and *Excélsior* editor, Julio Scherer García, that would survive many tests of loyalty.¹⁶⁰ Paz appreciated the freedom Scherer afforded him: "Muchos de los textos que aparecían en *Plural* [...] eran lo contrario de lo que él pensaba. No obstante, jamás nos hizo la menor censura." As discussed in chapter three, following the *Excélsior* crisis in 1976, Paz fully supported Scherer by resigning in protest. He then formed *Vuelta*, which according to Paz was the first independent Mexican literary magazine, as it relied exclusively upon subscriptions and advertisements for its funding.¹⁶¹

Although now an established and respected literary figure, Paz's harsh critiques and apparent inability to hear the views of anyone else increasingly turned the tide against himself. In October 1984, for example, Paz rocked the Mexican intellectual world by condemning the Sandinista government. Speaking in Frankfurt, Paz stated

that although the Nicaraguan Revolution had been a natural reaction to dictatorship, it had been distorted by its Marxist leaders. Paz scorned those who supported the Sandinistas claiming that they would not tolerate similar systems of government in their own countries.¹⁶² He sustained that there were many opposition groups in Nicaragua that were funded by the United States, none of which wanted a return to the previous dictatorship. Paz called for clean and free elections in Nicaragua to restore democracy.¹⁶³

These remarks caused a storm of protest in the Mexican Congress; the Minister for External Affairs assured the Nicaraguan people of Mexico's continued support.¹⁶⁴ *El Día* and *Unomásuno* published a letter signed by 229 university lecturers repudiating Paz's words.¹⁶⁵ Mexican Ambassador to Nicaragua, Horacio Labastida, described Paz's comments as careless and unfortunate.¹⁶⁶ Jorge Castañeda dismissed as misleading Paz's declaration that opposition to the Nicaraguan regime was restricted to one publication.¹⁶⁷ Those who had been inspired by Paz's resignation as Ambassador to India, claimed he had rejected his previously stated beliefs.¹⁶⁸ Others maintained Paz was trying to improve his chances of obtaining the Nobel Prize.¹⁶⁹ Paz was the subject of many derogatory cartoons;¹⁷⁰ more sinister were demonstrations during which Paz's effigy, photographs, and copies of his work were burned. Some of those who had opposed Paz's comments about Nicaragua, decried such action as too extreme.¹⁷¹ Paz's colleagues staunchly supported Paz: Krauze claimed those on the Left had misinterpreted Paz's words;¹⁷² Ruy Sánchez stressed that democracy was a central theme of Paz's text.¹⁷³ For proof, *Vuelta* published the complete version of Paz's speech.¹⁷⁴

Paz retained his stance on Nicaragua; yet, although he claimed to have the strength to swim against the tide, the affair evidently left him feeling isolated, vulnerable and, above all, angry. These emotions affected his subsequent discussions on the topic. Referring to the Arias Plan, Paz neglected to mention that he had condoned US aid to the Contras, and pointed out that the Plan justified his position.¹⁷⁵ Paz expressed incredulity that those who had opposed him two years earlier welcomed the agreement: "No pido que los que ayer me insultaron hoy reconozcan que fueron injustos; me sentiría desagraciado si, al menos, callasen. No ha sido así: ahora saluden el Plan Arias como una victoria."¹⁷⁶ Rather than applaud the Plan for satisfying all parties, Paz used it as evidence that he had been right to oppose the Sandinistas. The need to settle old scores was a strong influence upon his political comments.

In 1990, while not denying Paz's numerous talents and praising the assistance and encouragement he had given to young Mexican artists, Miguel Angel Granados Chapa mourned the changes in Paz over the last twenty-five years:

El desdén para quienes no piensan como él, su impaciencia ante las voces que juzga menores, aunque lo sean, su facilidad para derogar al otro con juicios sumarios, el dogmatismo que golpea más en tanto que se presenta bajo la máscara de la libertad, la sujeción que demanda de sus seguidores, el silencio que impone a su derredor, son defectos del alma que dificultan conciliar su imagen personal con el humanismo que desborda en la mayor parte de sus textos.¹⁷⁷

These were serious charges; above all that Paz was guilty of the dogmatic totalitarianism he purported to be against; yet had Paz changed as substantially as Granados Chapa maintained? Even before he became a household name, Paz had fixed convictions and desired others to think likewise. Paz always preferred to have a small, like-minded flock working beside him: in the 1960s he left a truly plural

cultural magazine because he disagreed with some of the collaborators' points of view; he twice left Mexico for lengthy periods when he perceived that few of his peers shared his opinions. Rather than having become increasingly bitter towards those with opposing beliefs, perhaps Paz's thoughts had merely become more vocal. Only by investigating Paz's political writings can the accuracy of Granados Chapa's accusations be ascertained.

Carlos Fuentes

I am a Mexican by will and by imagination. [...] Don't classify me, read me. I'm a writer not a genre. Carlos Fuentes, 1987.¹⁷⁸

Like Paz, Fuentes has a privileged background. The ambassador's son was born in Panama in 1928 and spent his youth in the United States. Fuentes stressed that living abroad gave him "the fresh vision of one who is both within and outside Mexican society".¹⁷⁹ Connections with Mexico were reinforced, Fuentes recalled that his father took great pains to ensure that he did not lose his roots:

My father made me read Mexican history, study Mexican geography, and understand the names, the dreams and defeats of Mexico: a non-existent country, I then thought, invented by my father to nourish my infant imagination, [...] a landscape and a soul so different from those of the United States that they seemed a fantasy.

A cruel fantasy: the history of Mexico was a history of crushing defeats, whereas I lived in a world [...] which celebrated victories. [...] Sometimes the names of United States victories were the same as the names of Mexico's defeats and humiliations.

Fuentes claimed that only after President Lázaro Cárdenas made a stand against the United States in 1938 by nationalising the oil industry did he become proud of being Mexican and gain a sense of his country as a real entity.¹⁸⁰

The course of his father's work took Fuentes to Chile where he "entered fully the universe of the Spanish language, of Latin American politics and its adversaries". Fuentes saw and appreciated the impact of the work of Pablo Neruda on the working class. He also had the opportunity to meet leading cultural figures, including Siqueiros. Fuentes recalled writing a "personal magazine"; an exercise book containing drawings, book reviews and discussions of topical events. At the age of fourteen he and a friend wrote a novel. Although Fuentes dismissed the work as a "highly imitative melodrama", it awoke a passion: "I wanted to write in order to show myself that my identity and country were real."¹⁸¹

At sixteen, Fuentes went to Mexico: "I discovered that my father's imaginary country was real, but more fantastic than any imaginary land". He finished his schooling at the Catholic Colegio Francés where Fuentes claimed the priests "made leftists of us by their constant denunciation of Mexican liberalism and especially of Benito Juárez". It was at this time that Fuentes, apparently against his family's wishes, declared his intention to become a writer. To satisfy his father, Fuentes took a law degree, after which he went to Europe and met Paz in Paris. Fuentes paid tribute to the influence of Paz on his work: "In the generous friendship of Octavio Paz, I learned that there were no privileged centers of culture, race, or politics; that nothing should be left out of literature."¹⁸²

It is perhaps such frank comments about his childhood that have made Fuentes the target of criticism. Gerald Martin explained that many Mexicans believe Fuentes does not really understand Mexican thoughts and concerns, for Fuentes, "Mexico is above all an idea".¹⁸³ His cosmopolitan, exclusive background has increased the vilification. José Joaquín Blanco described Fuentes as a "snob, más mexicano que cualquiera, más parisién que cualquiera, a la última moda y al calce del último manifiesto político".¹⁸⁴ José Donoso depicted a similar, although less disparaging, image: "He spoke perfect English. He had read every novel [...] and seen every painting and every movie in all the capitals of the world."¹⁸⁵ In 1996 Fuentes resolutely defended his Mexican credentials: "No me voy a disfrazar de lo que no soy. ¿Quieres que me ponga un sombrero de charro o que ande con huaraches? ¡No! Pertenezco a la burguesía mexicana, a la clase alta de México y ahí estoy."¹⁸⁶

Mexico and its history are important influences on Fuentes's short-stories and novels.¹⁸⁷ Castañeda acknowledged Fuentes's patriotism: "es un escritor que trae a México por adentro. Está donde esté, habla, piensa, escribe sobre México. Es una obsesión."¹⁸⁸ Steven Boldy described Fuentes's work as "haunting and maze-like explorations of identity and time". He added, for Fuentes, Mexico is "complex, violent, mysterious, [...] with its forces of Indian culture and resentment, historical traumas and contradictory masks imposed or donned over the centuries". Boldy explained that Fuentes presents "a reality alien to much of the national bourgeoisie".¹⁸⁹ Here, perhaps, lies the key to the criticism cast upon Fuentes, and the accusations that he has no true understanding of Mexico: he has a different vision and perspective. Fuentes revealed aspects that the bourgeoisie did not recognise or preferred to ignore.

It has been noted, not without irony, that Fuentes witnessed the Paris and Prague Springs, but was not at Tlatelolco in 1968.¹⁹⁰ Of the four writers studied in this thesis, only Poniatowska and Monsiváis were then in Mexico and neither was present at the massacre. Fuentes returned in March 1969. He bluntly gave his reasons: "porque soy y me considero ciudadano mexicano. Como tal, tengo derecho a entrar y salir de mi país cuantas veces me plazca."¹⁹¹ This comment inadvertently reveals much about Fuentes's concept of being Mexican: rather than be tied to his homeland, he comes and goes as he pleases. He stressed, "por qué vivir todo el tiempo en México, si el mundo es muy grande y bonito. Yo tengo muchos intereses y relaciones en otras partes y no las puedo abandonar." When asked if this provided a better vision of Mexico, Fuentes was ambivalent: "Sí, a veces sí, a veces no. Se ganan cosas, se pierden cosas."¹⁹² Poniatowska described his lifestyle: "Fuentes is never in Mexico, he's in London, New York, or at US universities. When he's here he says he can't write because so many people contact him."¹⁹³ Fuentes might argue that distancing himself from the country has given him the time and space in which to reflect upon Mexican issues and concerns. As Stephen Talbot pointed out, "viajar define a Carlos Fuentes. Es la esencia de su arte y de su personalidad."¹⁹⁴ Van Delden added, "Fuentes has projected a double profile as a writer and intellectual with a simultaneously national and cosmopolitan orientation".¹⁹⁵ Thus the vision of one who is both within and outside Mexico has remained fresh.

Although focusing on Mexico, Fuentes is concerned with Latin American issues. Fuentes identified the role of Latin American authors: "Our societies are very weak. The writer has to speak for the silent."¹⁹⁶ As an intellectual, Fuentes has shouldered this responsibility and has sought to correct the balance through his work. Addressing Latin American affairs has brought him into conflict with US interests. In 1954 he attended a

demonstration against the US sponsored coup in Guatemala.¹⁹⁷ Fuentes's initial endorsement of the Cuban Revolution was received with hostility by the United States. In March 1969, the United States refused Fuentes permission to enter Puerto Rico.¹⁹⁸ In 1980, Fuentes depicted the Nicaraguan Revolution as "a hopeful example for Latin Americans".¹⁹⁹ He subsequently gave lectures in the United States attacking US funding of the "Contras", action that although praised by Sandinista Minister of Culture, Ernesto Cardenal, was widely condemned elsewhere.²⁰⁰ While the tactful, courteous, Fuentes has generally adopted a diplomatic stance, his candid remarks about US involvement in Latin America have stimulated animated and often acrimonious debates. Although he was not singled out by Paz in 1984, Fuentes was among those he derided for supporting the Sandinistas.²⁰¹ In January 1988, Fuentes visited Nicaragua, held talks with the Sandinista leaders and met some of those injured in the fighting. He concluded that Nicaraguans should be left in peace to find their own democratic route.²⁰²

Fuentes nonetheless claims to have no formal political affiliations,²⁰³ describing himself as of the centre-left, or non-communist left.²⁰⁴ He dislikes the notion and restrictions of political labelling. He clarified, "[I] agree with many of the things [Marx] said. But I am not a Marxist. [...] That is a superficial tag that gets hung on me because of political positions." Speaking for the silent has cast Fuentes in the dissident mould. David Middleton stressed Fuentes's profound political and social commitment, stating that his conduct as a writer has been a "consistent search for moral certainty". Fuentes revealed how authors challenge the established order: "Good literature always destroys prejudices, destroys stupidity, old forms of thinking, forms of bondage. Good literature is always revolutionary and in that sense is independent of its political orientation or

content.²⁰⁵ Again, Fuentes showed that he viewed literature as a means of achieving social change.

His social commitment has drawn Fuentes to the poorer sectors of society. However, he is aware that it is difficult for one of his class to address the concerns of the disadvantaged. Fuentes explored the issue in his novel *Diana: o la cazadora solitaria*. The catalyst, Diana, has rejected the narrator, Carlos, preferring the attentions of a young, unkempt, ideological student. In bluntly stating her reasons, she emphasised the difference between the writer and his supposed convictions: "Busco a alguien que no sea como tú, aborrezco a la gente como tú, decente y culta, no quiero a un autor famoso, decente, refinado, occidental por muy mexicano que se crea, europeo.[...] ¿Tú de que has huido?, ¿qué te ha amenazado?"²⁰⁶ Fuentes explained that his narrator represented "a struggle [...] between fiction, autobiography and confession."²⁰⁷ As Jean Franco stated, "the fact that a fictional character voices these words does not make them less referential".²⁰⁸ Whether this passage is strictly autobiographical or not, the impression remains that, retrospectively at least, Fuentes was aware of the ambiguity of his early image and was examining it in his work. From behind the shield of fiction, Fuentes faced the dilemma: he might be sympathetic towards the disadvantaged, yet his own experience is vastly different. Can one who has never known poverty and hunger truly understand the plight of the poor?

Fuentes has sought to overcome this disparity: Fernando Benítez observed that Fuentes added authenticity to *Cambio de Piel*, (1964) by travelling through Europe, visiting the Nazi camp at Auschwitz and speaking to survivors of the holocaust.²⁰⁹ Application of the same technique is visible in Fuentes's political essays. He has

endeavoured to “get under their skin” of his subjects to understand their concerns before voicing them. Fuentes has also engaged his imagination to bridge the chasm between his background and those whose rights and needs he has addressed.

Elena Poniatowska

I can't live without writing, even though I can't always write. Elena Poniatowska, 1974.²¹⁰

Yo he escrito libros para dar voz a los que no la tienen, a los que están siempre silenciados. Elena Poniatowska, 1982.²¹¹

Poniatowska, the daughter of a Polish count and a Mexican aristocratic mother, was born in Paris in 1933. In 1942, the family left war-torn France for the safety of Mexico where Poniatowska was educated in an English school. French continued to be spoken in the home, but she learned Spanish from the servants; this, Poniatowska claimed, gave her “sympathetic feelings” for the poor and an understanding of their problems.²¹²

Like Fuentes, Poniatowska stressed that writing has given her a sense of identity: “Provengo de una familia de nómadas. La única forma que encontré para no flotar fue escribir. Y escribir acerca de México.”²¹³ In the 1950s Poniatowska worked as a journalist conducting interviews with members of the Mexican elite, working briefly for *Excelsior* before moving to *Novedades* where she stayed for the next twenty-five years.²¹⁴ She had no formal training: “todo lo hacía a pura intuición”.²¹⁵ Beth Jørgensen emphasised Poniatowska’s “tremendous capacity for engaging people in dialogue [...] especially people with whom she has little in common.” Jørgensen observed the “self-depreciating humor with which [Poniatowska] portrayed herself in conversation with the ‘great men’ of contemporary culture and politics”.²¹⁶ Poniatowska explained that

insecurity led her to use interviews as a professional technique: "Siempre he tenido preguntas, nunca respuestas".²¹⁷

The course of her work has brought Poniatowska into contact with a wide variety of people,²¹⁸ and led to a close friendship with an impoverished working class woman, Jesusa Palanceres.²¹⁹ Such exposure has made Poniatowska well aware of the vast differences of wealth in Mexican society and the potential problems this poses:

On Wednesday afternoons I went to see Jesusa, and in the evenings I accompanied my mother to some cocktail party at one embassy or another. I always tried to maintain a balance between the extreme poverty I shared in the afternoon and the glitter of the receptions. My socialism was two-faced. Climbing into my really hot bath I recalled Jesusa's wash tub, under her bed. [...] All I could think was: "I hope she never comes to know my house, never learns how I live."²²⁰

Yet in emphasising her limitations Poniatowska arguably illustrated her ability to overcome class divisions. Albeit temporarily, she "shared" Palanceres's poverty, not merely witnessed it. Poniatowska not only communicated with Palanceres her, but won her trust through a collective experience.

Although she referred to her socialism, Poniatowska stressed that a journalist should not be anchored to any one political belief.²²¹ Nonetheless, Poniatowska realised that she is deemed to be a socialist journalist due to the causes she has addressed.²²² Although not a member of the party, she has written in support of the Partido de la Revolución Democrática (PRD).²²³ And in the presidential elections of 1988 and 1994 she voted for Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas: "Porque de todos los candidatos creo que es él que más se preocupa por el país y por todas sus clases sociales. Es un hombre [...]"

auténtico en su lucha."²²⁴ In 1995, Poniatowska described herself as "francamente de izquierda".²²⁵

Such affiliations have distanced Poniatowska from the Mexican ruling party. She explained that, in any case, politics is not an avenue open to her: "There are many things I can't do because I wasn't born in Mexico." Moreover, Poniatowska has shown little interest in rewards bestowed by the government: "I neither want presents nor invitations. They've never said to me, as they have to other writers, that they're going to make me a director of something. And as I don't want to be a director, I couldn't care less."²²⁶ As Bell Gale Chevigny stated, "Poniatowska may have lived in crystal cages, but she never belonged to the PRI fortress".²²⁷

Poniatowska has been equally immune to government threats, but maintained this proves her "total irresponsibility". She recalled arriving in New York with political campaigner Rosario Ibarra de la Piedra:

I said, 'Rosario, look how popular we are, everyone is taking photos!' [...] And she said, 'ay Elena, use your initiative, [...] they are from Security'. I'd thought that I was Madonna. I have very little notion of such things; I don't live in the real world. I don't take any notice if they pursue me.²²⁸

Whether or not this is merely a tactical measure to create her own personal space, Poniatowska's stance of not living in the "real" world has enabled her to slip in and out of the many different spheres that comprise Mexico. Her refusal to accept society's rules and norms permitted her to interview Palanceres and Subcomandante Marcos without fear of being ostracised by the ruling classes. In her work Poniatowska has followed her own instincts.

Rather than make emotive pronouncements, in times of national crisis

Poniatowska speaks to the people involved. Jørgensen explained:

Poniatowska is profoundly disturbed by the world in which she lives, and as a writer she knows herself to be uniquely authorised to speak in and about that world. [...] Her continued commitment to denouncing injustice is tempered with an acute awareness of the imperfect capacity of any one person and the limited power of any single text to affect institutions or individuals.²²⁹

Although she refused the label, as an intellectual Poniatowska is aware of her responsibility when making political comments. Hence she uses not one person's view but many; weaving a tapestry of voices to recreate the causes she addresses. Wherever possible she directly communicates with those affected by political change. As Kathy Taylor noted, "the testimonies of Poniatowska [...] allow those who suffered the repression of the government to speak".²³⁰ For Poniatowska, writers should be worthy of their privileged position: "I have a kind of moral sense, a feeling that I need to justify my presence, my existence, to kind of pay for it."²³¹ Describing José Revueltas, Poniatowska stated, "no se puede desligar su obra de su vida porque su obra es consecuencia directa de ella. De no andar entre los obreros, no hubiera escrito acerca de ellos."²³² Poniatowska may not esteem her own contribution so highly, but by endeavouring to understand her subjects she adopted Revueltas's creed, playing down her role as author when transmitting their views.

Asked why she writes as she does, Poniatowska's reply was simple: "Porque así me sale."²³³ She explained that she responds to her emotions: "Escogí a la Jesusa Palanceres [...] porque ella me mexicanizaba. Escogí Tlatelolco porque me indignó la masacre."²³⁴ Poniatowska would later be compelled to chronicle the 1985 earthquakes

and the Zapatista cause. However, Poniatowska has not always recounted tragic events: "Otras veces, como en el caso del Jueves de corpus de 1971, me negué a escribir. De ningún modo he querido ser la viuda oficial de todas las catástrofes mexicanas."²³⁵ Poniatowska has written extensively about matters of Mexican concern, but only when she felt it was appropriate. She underlined that her chronicles are intended to document and describe specific incidents through the voices of those who otherwise have no access to the media.²³⁶

Carlos Monsiváis

Monsiváis le dé por reírse de sí mismo y de los demás. Elena Poniatowska 1976.²³⁷

No one more than Carlos Monsiváis reflects the mood of the times. Martin Stabb, 1994.²³⁸

Carlos Monsiváis was born in Mexico City in 1938; he never doubted that he would become a writer: "mi vida ha girado entorno a los libros". As a schoolboy he created parodies using his classmates as characters; at university he produced articles and essays for the college newspapers. Monsiváis soon discovered that depicting one's peers did not bring popularity, but it was not a cause for concern: he is a solitary figure, preferring to work alone at home surrounded by books, magazines and numerous cats, rather than among colleagues. In this way, Monsiváis feels that he has neither superiors nor inferiors, and is free to concentrate upon his vocation.²³⁹

Monsiváis was brought up a Protestant in a Catholic country. Such a lifestyle has arguably given Monsiváis, like Fuentes, the view of one who is both within and outside Mexican society. John Kraniauskas described Monsiváis's vision of Mexican

culture as a "slightly off-centre standpoint of critical closeness". Monsiváis, he continued, "seems always to have been of the libertarian Left - particularly close, in the period of the student movement of 1968, to the heterodox Marxism of the novelist José Revueltas".²⁴⁰ Monsiváis denied being a Marxist, preferring the description "journalist of the Left", yet he still found the term inadequate:

Prefiero decir que ser de izquierda es lo contrario a ser de derecha, digamos, proteger la sacrosantidad de la propiedad privada, exaltar el principio de autoridad, sacrificar las libertades presentes por el bienestar futuro, oprimir a las mayorías y minorías en nombre de valores más allá, o del sistema patriarcal.²⁴¹

Monsiváis is not blind to the faults of the Mexican Left: "Cuestiono a la Revolución Mexicana, a la Cubana, a la izquierda, a la derecha."²⁴² Like Paz, he is an astute and constant critic of the internal differences that have dogged Mexican socialist movements. In recent years Monsiváis has become closely associated with the PRD. He wrote in favour of Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas before the 1988 presidential election, and made no secret of the fact that he voted for Cárdenas in 1994.²⁴³

Christopher Domínguez Michael refuted that Monsiváis is an outsider: "Como los movimientos marginales que Monsiváis ha contribuido a poner en el centro, él mismo ocupa el espacio axial de un personaje que con el tiempo va cobrando una dimensión insospechada."²⁴⁴ Like Poniatowska, Monsiváis gives a voice to those on the margins of society; yet their methodology differs. Although both may attend the same event, Poniatowska's accounts tend to be more personal, full of names and details whereas Monsiváis's chronicles recreate the atmosphere of the scene as a whole. Poniatowska described Monsiváis's work as "mucho más intelectualizado" than her own: "A Monsiváis lo admiro mucho porque tiene una capacidad notable de analizar,

sintetizar, preveer, que yo no tengo. Tiene una capacidad de formular una idea a partir de lo que sucedió, sacar conclusiones y ver más allá, mientras que me lanzo de cabeza al sentimiento."²⁴⁵ Although disparaging about the nature of her own contribution, Poniatowska indicated that their deep friendship is based upon equality: "Monsiváis ha sido para mí como un hermano, hemos trabajado muchísimo juntos."²⁴⁶ She explained, "Monsiváis y yo hemos hablado en forma más o menos paralela a lo largo de estos diez años del Movimiento Estudiantil".²⁴⁷ They take separate but parallel courses. When put together, the chronicles of Monsiváis and Poniatowska provide a more complete representation of events of national importance.

Monsiváis's interest in the oppressed perhaps partly stems from his non-conformist origins. He claimed, "me correspondió nacer del lado de las minorías y muy temprano conocí el rencor y el resentimiento".²⁴⁸ Poniatowska stressed his ties to popular causes:

His country is Mexico, his life and literature are Mexico; his cause, that of the poorest Mexicans, the ones that fill the Zócalo during demonstrations. For him the popular movements, the multitudes that are becoming organised, the civil society that is finally demanding its rights, every gathering of young people, are all liberating.²⁴⁹

Alliance to such movements has automatically distanced Monsiváis from the government. As John King noted, "Monsiváis has always avoided the clutches of the [...] Mexican State, [he] remains a critic of state power [...] and a historian of new social movements".²⁵⁰ Like Poniatowska, Monsiváis refuses to be intimidated by oppressive forces: "Hace tiempo que no considero válido eso de lo que tolera o no tolera el gobierno."²⁵¹ Poniatowska and Monsiváis have never held a government post; nor have they endorsed any individual president.

Adolfo Castañón described Monsiváis as “uno de los hombres mejor informados de México”. He explained how Monsiváis receives his information through a network of friends and associates, and outlined the complexity of his character: “El, en persona, suele ser frío, huraño; se diría que sólo se humaniza ante una cámara de televisión.”²⁵² Like Poniatowska, Monsiváis obtained his data through personal contacts; yet while Poniatowska is seen as a warm and gregarious, Castañón portrayed Monsiváis as cold and unsociable. Linda Egan gave Monsiváis the opportunity to reply:

Mi imagen de mí mismo es de una gente muy *aloof*, muy retirada, muy distanciada, que no concede y por lo tanto no espera demasiado de los demás, pero a lo sí tiene razón Castañón. [...] Pero no es tampoco un asunto al que dé mucha importancia.²⁵³

This enigmatic figure is nonetheless popular: Monsiváis has an enormous following throughout the country. Fernando Benítez stressed the difficulty of his prose: “desgraciadamente habla en un lenguaje cifrado. Sus lectores, además de mexicanos, deben ser algo así como iniciados”.²⁵⁴ Yet Kraniauskas explained that Monsiváis shows “a basic need to communicate”.²⁵⁵ In many respects Monsiváis personifies a quality newspaper: knowledgeably commenting upon a wide range of subjects including national and international political affairs, cinema, music, sport and religion. His principal concern is everyday life in Mexico City and the interests and causes of those who live there. Although a retiring man, Monsiváis is a great public performer, acting behind the shield of his ironic, often mocking, sense of humour.

Sarcasm and wit are integral parts of Monsiváis’s work. José Emilio Pacheco clarified that Monsiváis has chronicled some difficult times: “Pero Monsiváis [...] contempla de frente y por el camino de la crítica y el sarcasmo transforma la tentación

de la desesperación en la voluntad de que las cosas sean distintas mañana.²⁵⁶

Monsiváis asserted that he deliberately employs irony:

Una manera de defenderte ante la realidad tan opresiva es usar el humor como aparato catártico. Si uno viviera irritándose ante lo que pasa, acabaría destrozado. Yo empleo la irritación, el encono y el dolor de la mejor manera posible para la sobrevivencia psicológica. El humor, aparte de ser un método genuino de diversión, para mí es una técnica organizada de sobrevivencia.²⁵⁷

Poniatowska divulged another method of coping with pressure:

You read, "today there's a book presentation at 7 p.m. presented by Carlos Monsiváis". Later you read he'll be somewhere else. [...] Either he's an oblique man or he can, like the Holy Spirit, be in twenty places at the same time! [...] So probably people get very angry with him.²⁵⁸

Monsiváis may have gained his aloof, detached image by agreeing to patronise events and then not turn up. Fame has not considerably changed his lifestyle, however. As Pacheco stressed, this is unusual: "De todos los escritores de mi generación, Monsiváis y yo somos los únicos que seguimos viviendo en el mismo lugar que hace 30 años, o sea que nuestra situación no ha mejorado, o sea que no hemos recibido los cañonazos del poder."²⁵⁹ Indeed, Monsiváis rejects celebrity status: "No soy famoso; soy conocido, y soy conocido como intelectual en un medio que tiene una idea abstracta, vaga y remota de los intelectuales. Que un intelectual sea conocido por gente que no lo lee es una excentricidad."²⁶⁰ Monsiváis underlined his disdain for theoretical vagaries in preference for tangible action. For Poniatowska, at least, this gives Monsiváis additional standing:

Monsiváis tiene una inteligencia fuera de serie y que una sola frase suya puede resumir nuestras realidades [...] pero somos incapaces de verbalizar. [...] Subraya despiadado nuestras fallas, nos reconcilia con nosotros mismos al exhibirnos con humor, como esta bola de payasos que somos.²⁶¹

Monsiváis's astute vision and ability to communicate what he sees, have given him the perspective of "un ciudadano, una conciencia *civil* democrática que, además, se sitúa como un *outsider* autocrítico".²⁶²

From the observations noted above, whether or not individuals agree with Monsiváis's politics or approve of his methods as a writer, all concur that he is genuinely interested in the oppressed. He may appear aloof and distant, but his concerns for the poor or persecuted are heart-felt and constant. Monsiváis may be double booked for presentations, but personally attends demonstrations. Although Monsiváis's vision is firmly focused within the bounds of his own principles, he does not overtly impose his own point of view: As Poniatowska explained, "no lanza juicios, recrea atmósferas, su ingenio rápido y devastador lo destina a la defensa de los pateados y a la demolición de las instituciones autoritarias del poder".²⁶³ Monsiváis has simply chronicled life in Mexico as he sees it; although he has used a network of information sources, he relies upon the accuracy of his own observations.

As illustrated above, "intellectual" is a fluid term: these four writers work in varied ways and in different spheres, but they share a genuine concern for national affairs. They may not always agree;²⁶⁴ even if they do in principle their work often reveals characteristic differences. As will be shown, their relationship with State power has taken separate courses. In October 1968, however, there was no dispute. In the words of Poniatowska, "el presidente es el padre, nuestro papacito, y en el 68 nos tocó, [...] un padre colérico que tomó una silla para romperla en la cabeza y así matar al hijo desobediente".²⁶⁵ The four were united in their condemnation of President Díaz Ordaz following an event that transformed the relationship between writers and the Mexican government.

- ¹ Octavio Paz, "El plagio, la plaga y la llaga", *Plural*, No.36, Sept. 1974, p.90.
- ² Nicola Miller, "Intellectuals and the State in Spanish America: A Comparative Perspective", in Will Fowler, (ed.), *Ideologues and Ideologies in Latin America*, (Westport, Connecticut, 1997), p.47.
- ³ Zygmunt Bauman, *Interpreters and Legislators*, (New York, 1987), pp.1-2.
- ⁴ Q. Hoare and G. Nowell Smith, (eds.), *Selections From the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci*, (London, 1973), pp.3-15.
- ⁵ Michel Foucault quoted in Alessandro Fontana and Pasquale Pasquino, "Truth and Power", in Paul Rabinow, (ed.), *The Foucault Reader*, (London, 1991), pp.68-74.
- ⁶ Bauman, *Interpreters and Legislators*, pp.4-5.
- ⁷ M'Hammed Sabour, "Between Patronage and Autonomy: The Position of Intellectuals in Modern Society", in P.K. Lawrence and M. Döbler, (eds.), *Knowledge and Power: The Changing Role of European Intellectuals*, (Vermont, 1996), pp.17-18.
- ⁸ Jürgen Habermas quoted by Stanley Aronowitz, "On Intellectuals", in Bruce Robbins, (ed.), *Intellectuals: Aesthetics, Politics, Academics*, (Minneapolis, 1990), p.34.
- ⁹ Ido Weijers, "Intellectuals, Knowledge and Democracy", in Lawrence and Döbler, (eds.), *Knowledge and Power*, p.27.
- ¹⁰ Camp, *Intellectuals and the State*, pp.32-39.
- ¹¹ Alain G. Gagnon, "The Role of Intellectuals in Liberal Democracies, Political Influence and Social Involvement", in Alain G. Gagnon, (ed.), *Intellectuals in Liberal Democracies: Political Influence and Social Involvement*, (New York, 1987), pp.3-6.
- ¹² Alan Knight, "Intellectuals in the Mexican Revolution", Conference of Mexican and United States Historians, Chicago, Illinois, Sept. 1981, pp.2, 7.
- ¹³ Bauman, *Interpreters and Legislators*, p.8.
- ¹⁴ Hoare and Nowell Smith, (eds.), *Selections From the Prison Notebooks*, p.x. Hoare stated that from Gramsci's letters "it is possible to obtain **some indication** of how Gramsci **intended** his work to be understood" (my emphasis). Indeed, Roger Simon concluded, "we have to accept that Gramsci does not provide a comprehensive theory of intellectuals". See, Roger Simon, *Gramsci's Political Thought: An Introduction*, (London, 1985), p.98.
- ¹⁵ Karl Mannheim, *Essays on the Sociology of Culture*, Collected Works, Volume 7, (London 1997), p.118.
- ¹⁶ Claire Brewster, interview with Ato Quayson, Cambridge, 9 Dec. 1999. See also Ato Quayson, *Postcolonialism: Theory, Practice or Process?*, (Cambridge, 2000).
- ¹⁷ Terry Eagleton, *Ideology: An Introduction*, (London, 1991), pp.119-120.
- ¹⁸ Fontana and Pasquino, "Truth and Power", p.68.
- ¹⁹ Richard Terdiman, *Discourse / Counter-Discourse*, (New York, 1985), p.64.
- ²⁰ Weijers, "Intellectuals, Knowledge and Democracy", pp.29-30.
- ²¹ Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "Criticism, Feminism, and the Institution", an interview with Elizabeth Gross, in Robbins, (ed.), *Intellectuals*, p.156.
- ²² R. Radhakrishnan, "Toward an Effective Intellectual: Foucault or Gramsci?", in *ibid.*, pp.81, 97.
- ²³ Edward Said, "American Intellectuals and Middle East Politics", an interview with Bruce Robbins, in *ibid.*, pp.143-144.
- ²⁴ Raymond Williams, *Problems in Materialism and Culture*, (London, 1980), p.14.
- ²⁵ Miller, *In the Shadow of the State*, pp.13, 21-22. Gramsci believed that providing access to formal education for all sectors of society would create organic intellectuals of the working class.
- ²⁶ Castañeda, *Utopia Unarmed*, pp.199-201. Although he did not allude to it, Castañeda was himself experiencing this in Mexico under President Salinas. As discussed in chapter six, Salinas incorporated the popular movements of the 1980s under his Solidaridad programme.
- ²⁷ Néstor García Canclini, quoted by Gilbert M. Joseph and Daniel Nugent, "Popular Culture and State Formation", in Gilbert M. Joseph and Daniel Nugent, (eds.), *Everyday Forms of State Formation*, (London, 1994), pp.15-16.
- ²⁸ Roberto Schwarz, *Misplaced Ideas: Essays on Brazilian Culture*, (London, 1992), p.34.
- ²⁹ Beatriz Sarlo, "Raymond Williams in Latin America", unpublished paper, King's College Cambridge, 27 April 1992.
- ³⁰ José Aricó, *Lu cola de diablo*, (Buenos Aires, 1988), pp.23-25, 85, 113-115, 135.

- ³¹ F.P. Ellison, "The Writer", in John J. Johnson, (ed.), *Continuity and Change in Latin America*, (Stanford, California, 1967), pp.88, 100.
- ³² Castañeda, *Utopia Unarmed*, pp.20-21, 177-178. Castañeda provided no specific examples, illustrating that it is easier to apply a label by looking at numbers than at individuals.
- ³³ *Ibid.*, pp.177-180, 188-194.
- ³⁴ Jeffrey M. Puryear, *Thinking Politics: Intellectuals and Democracy in Chile, 1973-1988*, (Baltimore, 1994), pp.x, 6-9, 55-56, 74, 161-162.
- ³⁵ Vargas Llosa, *A Writer's Reality*, p.145.
- ³⁶ Castañeda, *Utopia Unarmed*, p.185.
- ³⁷ García Márquez, quoted in *ibid.*, p.185.
- ³⁸ Miller, *In the Shadow of the State*, pp.20-21. Miller, however, used this quotation to support the notion that Latin Americans tend to confuse "organic" intellectual with one who supports social revolution.
- ³⁹ Tad Szulc, *Fidel: A Critical Portrait*, (London, 1986), p.505.
- ⁴⁰ José Yglesias, "Cuba: Revolution and the Intellectual - The Strange Case of Heberto Padilla", *Index on Censorship*, Vol. 1, No. 2, Summer 1972, pp.65-134. See in particular pp.81-82, 85, 125-126.
- ⁴¹ Roderic A. Camp, *Politics in Mexico*, (New York, 1996), p.140.
- ⁴² Michel Foucault, "Afterword: The Subject and Power", in Hubert L. Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow, (eds.), *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*, (Brighton, 1986), p.212.
- ⁴³ Camp, *Intellectuals and the State*, p.43. Of the other intellectuals who were nominated, José Emilio Pacheco and Víctor Flores Olea were all placed in 12th position; Luis Villoro was 18th; Héctor Aguilar Camín and Fernando Benítez were joint 22nd (with Elena Poniatowska); Jesús Reyes Heróles, Enrique Krauze and Vicente Leñero were equal 35th.
- ⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p.46.
- ⁴⁵ Vicente Leñero, quoted in W.M. Langford, *The Mexican Novel Comes of Age*, (Indiana, 1972), p.152.
- ⁴⁶ Claire Brewster, Interview with Carlos Monsiváis, London, 16 Jan. 1996.
- ⁴⁷ Régis Debry, (trans. Francis Mulhern), *Teachers, Writers, Celebrities: The Intellectuals of Modern France*, (London, 1981), p.86.
- ⁴⁸ Claire Brewster, Interview with Elena Poniatowska, Mexico City, 13 Sept. 1996.
- ⁴⁹ Julio Scherer García, "Octavio Paz: Veo una ausencia de proyectos. Las ideas se han evaporado", *Proceso*, No.58, 12 Dec. 1977, p.8.
- ⁵⁰ Antonio Marimón, "Octavio Paz: la política y el instante", *Unomásuno*, No.1446, 18 Nov. 1981, p.24.
- ⁵¹ Octavio Paz, "México: Futuro Contingente", *Epoca*, No. 1, 10 June 1991, p.22.
- ⁵² Octavio Paz, (trans. Helen R. Lane), *One Earth, Four or Five Worlds*, (Manchester, 1985), p.158.
- ⁵³ Carlos Fuentes, 1991, quoted in Castañeda, *Utopia Unarmed*, p.182.
- ⁵⁴ Claire Brewster, Interview with Carmen Boullosa, Mexico City, 8 Dec. 1994.
- ⁵⁵ Emilio Fuego, "Marcos, Chiapas, Cuba, Octavio Paz, 'Como agua para chocolate' ... y las razones de José Emilio Pacheco para no dar entrevistas", *Proceso* No.921, 27 June 1994, p.61.
- ⁵⁶ Mario Vargas Llosa, "The Writer in Latin America", *Index on Censorship*, Vol. 7, No. 6, Nov./Dec. 1978, p.35.
- ⁵⁷ Octavio Paz, *El ogro filantrópico: Historia y política 1971-1978*, (México D.F., 1979), pp.85-100.
- ⁵⁸ Octavio Paz, (trans. Lysander Kemp), *The Labyrinth of Solitude*, (London, 1967), p.149; Jacobo Zabludovsky, "Echeverría, un hombre que sabe escuchar el rumor de la historia, declara Octavio Paz", *Siempre*, No.929, 14 April 1971, p.24.
- ⁵⁹ Rodríguez Ledesma, *El pensamiento político de Octavio Paz*, pp.11, 35.
- ⁶⁰ Julio Scherer García, "Octavio Paz: La conciencia es lo contrario de la razón de Estado", *Proceso*, No.57, 5 Dec. 1977, p.6.
- ⁶¹ George Philip, *The Presidency in Mexican Politics*, (London, 1992), p.175.
- ⁶² Carlos Monsiváis, "Un Premio Manuel Buendía, una razón contra la cultura de la impunidad", *Proceso*, No.605, 6 June 1988, pp.14-15.
- ⁶³ Carlos Monsiváis, "No con un sollozo, sino entre disparos (Notas sobre cultura mexicana 1910-1968)", *Revista Iberoamericana*, No.55, July-Dec. 1989, p.715.
- ⁶⁴ Daniel Cosío Villegas quoted in Miller, *In the Shadow of the State*, p.45; Jürgen Buchenau, "Científicos", in Micheal S. Werner, (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Mexico: History, Society and Culture*, Vol. 1, (Chicago and London, 1997), pp.260-261; James D. Cockcroft, *Intellectual Precursors of the Mexican Revolution, 1900-1913*, (Austin, 1976), p.56-58. In Buchenau's words, the *científicos* were "an influential group of intellectuals and policy advisers [who] defy easy description and analysis". The group was formed in 1892, under the name Unión Liberal; Gabino Barreda was its "intellectual grandfather". Its ideology, based around the slogan "order and progress", was promoted in the newspaper *La Libertad*.

- ⁶⁵ Cockcroft, *Intellectual Precursors*, pp.44-45, 56-58. Among them was Luis Cabrera who would play an important role as advisor to President Carranza.
- ⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, pp.59-61.
- ⁶⁷ David Brading, "Liberal Patriotism and the Mexican Reforma", *Journal of Latin American Studies*, Vol. 20, 1988, p.47; Arthur Schmidt, "Sierra, Justo", in Werner, (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Mexico*, Vol. 2, p.1343. Sierra was among the contributors to *La Libertad*, yet served as Under-Secretary of Public Instruction from 1901 to 1905 and as Minister of Public Instruction and Bellas Artes.
- ⁶⁸ Cockcroft, *Intellectual Precursors*, p.233.
- ⁶⁹ Miller, *In the Shadow of the State*, p.45.
- ⁷⁰ Alistair Hennessy, "Artists, Intellectuals and Revolution: Recent Books on Mexico", *Journal of Latin American Studies*, Vol. 3, 1971, p.73.
- ⁷¹ Cockcroft, *Intellectual Precursors*, p.45.
- ⁷² Miller, *In the Shadow of the State*, p.151.
- ⁷³ Camp, *Intellectuals and the State*, p.188. This trend has continued: in 1980 only 6 per cent of Mexicans bought books.
- ⁷⁴ Elena Poniatowska, "Interview with Juan Soriano", *Evergreen Review*, Vol. 2, No. 7, Winter 1959, pp.146-147.
- ⁷⁵ Hennessy, "Artists, Intellectuals and Revolution", p.73.
- ⁷⁶ Miller, "Intellectuals and the State", p.58.
- ⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p.53.
- ⁷⁸ Miller, *In the Shadow of the State*, p.250.
- ⁷⁹ Lorenzo Meyer, "Historical Roots of the Authoritarian State in Mexico", in J.L. Reyna & R.S. Weinert, (eds.), *Authoritarianism in Mexico*, (Philadelphia, 1977), p.16.
- ⁸⁰ Luis Alberto García e Isaias Hinojosa, "Bajo el signo de la justicia social surge en México un instrumental político al servicio del pueblo: Castillo, Paz, Fuentes, fijan sus bases y metas", *Siempre!*, No.965, 6 Oct. 1971, p.41; Paz, *One Earth*, p.126; Carlos Monsiváis, "Aquí y ahora", *Nexos*, No.106, Oct. 1986, pp.15-16.
- ⁸¹ Jorge G. Castañeda, "El Estado es él", *El País*, No.6128, 10 Feb. 1994, p.25.
- ⁸² Jorge Luis Espinosa y Fermin Ramirez, "México es la dictadura perfecta: Mario Vargas Llosa", *Unomásuno*, No.4610, 31 Aug. 1990, p.22.
- ⁸³ Octavio Paz, "La conjura de los letrados", *Vuelta*, No.185, April 1992, p.12. Ironically Paz was accusing others of being too close to power at a time when the same charge was being levied against him. The intellectual struggles for power under President Salinas are discussed in chapter six.
- ⁸⁴ Castañeda, "El Estado es él", p.25. This article appeared in the Spanish daily; a close scrutiny of the Mexican press indicates that it was not published within Mexico.
- ⁸⁵ Raymond Williams, *Marxism and Literature*, (Oxford, 1977), p.111. Gramsci believed that counter-hegemony should be created by working people who should form a class to achieve their hegemonic potential.
- ⁸⁶ Florencia Mallon, "Time on the Wheel: Cycles of Revisionism and the 'New Cultural History'", *Hispanic American Historical Review*, 79:2, May 1999, p.340.
- ⁸⁷ Eagleton, *Ideology*, p.113.
- ⁸⁸ Terdiman, *Discourse / Counter-Discourse*, p.59.
- ⁸⁹ Mary Kay Vaughan, "Cultural Approaches to Peasant Politics in the Mexican Revolution", *Hispanic American Historical Review*, 79:2, May 1999, pp.269-270.
- ⁹⁰ Aricó, *La cola*, pp.23-25, 85, 113-115, 135. Aricó dated the first publication in Buenos Aires as between 1958 and 1962; *Prison Notebooks* was distributed in Brazil from around 1966 to 1968.
- ⁹¹ *Ibid.*, pp.84-89; see also, Juan Carlos Portantiero, *Los usos de Gramsci*, (Folios Ediciones, México, 1981). Portantiero is quoted from Juan Carlos Portantiero, "Gramsci para latinoamericanos" in C Bucí-Glucksmann, J.C. Portantiero, G. Vacca, M.A. Macciocchi, *Gramsci y la política*, coordinado por Carlos Sirvent, (México, 1980), pp.29-51, pp.36-37.
- ⁹² A. Córdoba, "Gramsci y la izquierda mexicana", *La ciudad futura*, No. 6, Aug. 1987, Suplemento No. 4, p.14, quoted by Aricó, *La cola*, p.103.
- ⁹³ Carlos Monsiváis, "Prólogo al libro de Gasca: De repudis y movimientos populares", *Proceso*, No. 94, 21 Aug. 1978, p.52; Octavio Paz, "The Philanthropic Ogre", *Dissent*, Winter 1979, pp.43-44; Carlos Fuentes, *Tiempo mexicano*, (México D.F., 1971), pp.190-192; Jonathan Tittler, "Interview with Carlos Fuentes", *Diacritics*, 10, iii, Sept. 1980, p.53. Poniatowska, conversely, waited until after the 1985 earthquakes. See, Elena Poniatowska, "Combatir el olvido" *La Jornada*, No.432, 30 Nov. 1985, p.19.
- ⁹⁴ See, Schwarz, *Misplaced Ideas*, p.34.

- ⁹⁵ Alan Knight, "Weapons and Arches in the Mexican Revolutionary Landscape", in *Everyday Forms of State Formation*, Duke University Press, London, 1994, p.25.
- ⁹⁶ Vaughan, "Cultural Approaches", pp.269-305.
- ⁹⁷ Eric Van Young, "The New Cultural History Comes to Old Mexico", *Hispanic American Historical Review*, 79:2, May 1999, pp.215, 221, 224. That the *Hispanic American Historical Review* dedicated an entire issue to this debate indicates its size. William French explained that a lack of empirical evidence and the need for theory have led to a situation in which the new cultural historians imagine "how the nation has been imagined and [...] how the imaginings [...] have been (and are) implicated in each other." William E. French, "Imagining and the Cultural History of Nineteenth-Century Mexico", *Hispanic American Historical Review*, 79:2, May 1999, p.249.
- ⁹⁸ Elena Poniatowska, "Periodismo: literatura bajo presión", *Sábado*, No.138, 28 June 1980, p.3.
- ⁹⁹ Camp, "Intellectuals in Comparative Perspective", p.47. Intellectuals' participation in the ecological Grupo de los Cien is an example of well-meaning professionals adopting a worthy cause. Most members accepted that their participation was at best limited. Poniatowska acknowledged that although she regularly attended meetings and signed petitions when asked, the group had enjoyed little success. She admitted that intellectuals had no experience in ecology, citing fellow member Fuentes's *La región más transparente* in which he described a region so dry that only berries grew. This, Poniatowska pointed out, was inaccurate: such plants need much water. See, [N.A.], "Hablan 47 de los 125 que son el Grupo de los 100 (7 ya murieron)", *Proceso*, No.672, 18 Sept. 1989, p.51.
- ¹⁰⁰ Camp, *Intellectuals and the State*, p.32.
- ¹⁰¹ Miller, *In the Shadow of the State*, p.30.
- ¹⁰² Jorge Fernández Menéndez, "Krauze: no endioso al capitalismo; el anarquismo tiene vigencia plena /II", *Unomásuno*, No.4622, 12 Sept. 1990, p.9.
- ¹⁰³ Brewster, interview with Poniatowska, 1996; Steele, *Politics, Gender*, p.64. Steele listed Poniatowska's affiliations with popular and social movements.
- ¹⁰⁴ Arturo Warman, 1978, quoted in Camp, *Intellectuals and the State*, p.134. Although there are no figures available, there is a thriving second-hand market for these magazines at considerably reduced prices. This refutes Warman's claim that they are only read by the elite.
- ¹⁰⁵ Brewster, interview with Monsiváis, 1996.
- ¹⁰⁶ Mario Vargas Llosa, "The Writer in Latin America", *Index on Censorship*, Vol. 7, No. 6, Nov./Dec. 1978, p.35.
- ¹⁰⁷ Brewster, Interview with Poniatowska.
- ¹⁰⁸ Héctor Aguilar Camín, quoted in Philip L. Russell, *Mexico Under Salinas*, (Austin 1994), p.133.
- ¹⁰⁹ Castañeda, *Utopia Unarmed*, pp.194-195.
- ¹¹⁰ Kevin Boyle, (ed.), *In the Shadow of Buendía: The Mass Media and Censorship in Mexico*, (The International Centre on Censorship, London, 1989), p.51.
- ¹¹¹ Brewster, interview with Poniatowska.
- ¹¹² Camp, *Politics in Mexico*, p.142.
- ¹¹³ Carlos Monsiváis, "Notes on Self-Censorship", in Boyle, (ed.), *In the Shadow of Buendía*, p.xix.
- ¹¹⁴ Camp, *Politics in Mexico*, pp.142-143.
- ¹¹⁵ Brewster, interview with Poniatowska. It is somewhat ironic that in a country such as Mexico, that is far from liberated, on 7 June each year a "Freedom of the Press" day is celebrated.
- ¹¹⁶ Camp, "Intellectuals: Agents of Change?", p.308.
- ¹¹⁷ Monsiváis, "Notes on Self-Censorship", p.xvi.
- ¹¹⁸ Patricia Vega, "Celebra 20 años la primera edición de La noche de Tlatelolco /I", *La Jornada*, No.2500, 27 Aug. 1991, p.39.
- ¹¹⁹ Monsiváis, "Notes on Self-Censorship", pp.vi-vii.
- ¹²⁰ Raymundo Riva Palacio, "No a las amenazas", *El Financiero*, No.3240, 2 Feb. 1994, p.41.
- ¹²¹ Many authors, "Solidaridad de intelectuales con Cristina y José Emilio Pacheco", *La Jornada*, No.3728, 25 Jan. 1995, p.2. This letter bore some 70 signatures, among them Poniatowska and Monsiváis; it voiced indignation at the attack and called for President Zedillo to investigate the case. Another letter, endorsed by 13 members of the *Vuelta* team, made no such demand to Zedillo.
- ¹²² Octavio Paz, quoted in Camp, *Intellectuals and the State*, p.41.
- ¹²³ [N.A.], "Octavio Paz Looks for his Old Friend Eros" *New York Times*, No.49724, 11 June 1994, p.16.
- ¹²⁴ Camp, "Intellectuals: Agents of Change?", p.314.
- ¹²⁵ Poniatowska, "Periodismo", p.6. At that time those in Paz's camp were Julieta Campos, Ulalume González de León, Salvador Elizondo, Juan García Ponce, Jorge Ibaranguotia, Enrique Krauze, Alejandro Rossi, Tomás Segovia, y Ramón Xirau. With Monsiváis were Luis Miguel Aguilar, José Joaquín Blanco, Adolfo Castañón, Rolando Cordera, Luis González de Alba, Carlos Pereyra, José María

Pérez Gay, Antonio Saborit y Bernardo Recamier. While many of the latter joined *Nexos*, Castañón became a regular contributor to *Vuelta* and, as is discussed in chapter six, in February 1995 Segovia defended Fuentes's position against the *Vuelta* position. The outlets for the work of Paz, Fuentes, Poniatowska and Monsiváis are outlined in the introduction.

¹²⁶ Castañeda, *Utopia Unarmed*, p.197. Polarizations did, however, become increasingly pronounced in the 1990s. As discussed in chapter six, personal rivalries fuelled the battles between *Vuelta* and *Nexos*.

¹²⁷ Brewster, interview with Poniatowska.

¹²⁸ Monsiváis, "Notes on Self-Censorship", pp.xvii-xviii.

¹²⁹ Camp, *Intellectuals and the State*, p.186.

¹³⁰ [N.A.], "Octavio Paz: Política, literature, moral", *Excelsior*, No.20235, 16 Aug. 1972, p.12.

¹³¹ Elena Poniatowska, "Una sillita al sol", *La Jornada*, No.2185, 12 Oct. 1990, p.9.

¹³² Miguel Angel Quemain, "Entrevista a Octavio Paz: 75 años de poesía", *La Jornada Semanal*, No.239, 16 April 1989, p.3; Araceli Muñoz Valencia, "Nací, y me eduqué con la izquierda: Octavio Paz", *El Financiero*, No.4745, 21 April 1998, p.53; Ruy Sánchez, *Una introducción*, p.19.

¹³³ Muñoz Valencia, "Nací, y me eduqué", p.53.

¹³⁴ Octavio Paz, "Soledad y comunión", *La Jornada Semanal*, No.139, 17 May 1987, pp.9-10. Alfred MacAdam, (trans. Guillermo Sheridan), "Octavio Paz: Tiempos, lugares, encuentros", *Vuelta*, No.181, Dec. 1991, p.11. In December 1996 many of these books were destroyed in a fire at Paz's apartment in Col. Cuauhtémoc, Mexico City.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, pp.11, 15-16.

¹³⁶ Ruy Sánchez, *Una introducción*, p.28.

¹³⁷ John King, *Sur*, (Cambridge, 1986), p.84; Ilan Stavans, "Vuelta: A Succinct Appraisal", *Salmagundi*, No.108, Fall 1995, p.215.

¹³⁸ Ruy Sánchez, *Una introducción*, p.48.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, p.32.

¹⁴⁰ Manuel Aznar, "Desde el nombramiento a Paz se inició la polémica", *Proceso*, No.556, 29 June 1987, p.44.

¹⁴¹ Muñoz Valencia, "Nací, y me eduqué", p.53.

¹⁴² Julio Scherer García, "Octavio Paz: La conciencia es lo contrario de la razón de Estado", *Proceso*, No.57, 5 Dec. 1977, pp.9-10.

¹⁴³ Octavio Paz, *Convergences: Essays on Art and Literature*, (London, 1987), p.100.

¹⁴⁴ Ruy Sánchez, *Una introducción*, pp.28, 32-33. Paz later distanced himself from these early poems. Not one of the seven poems included in *Luna silvestre* appears in any anthology of his work.

¹⁴⁵ MacAdam, "Octavio Paz: Tiempos, lugares", p.16.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p.16.

¹⁴⁷ Paz, *The Labyrinth of Solitude*, p.3. I would like to thank Alan Knight for drawing my attention to this point.

¹⁴⁸ Ruy Sánchez, *Una introducción*, pp.67, 78.

¹⁴⁹ Poniatowska, "Una sillita", p.9.

¹⁵⁰ Ruy Sánchez, *Una introducción*, pp.78-79.

¹⁵¹ MacAdam, "Octavio Paz: Tiempos, lugares", p.16.

¹⁵² Mercedes Valdivieso, "Entre el tlatoani y el caudillo", *La Cultura en México*, No.426, 8 April 1970, p.ii.

¹⁵³ Enrique Krauze, (Trans. Hank Heifetz), *Mexico: Biography of Power*, (New York, 1998), pp.629-652.

¹⁵⁴ Philip, *The Presidency*, p.61.

¹⁵⁵ Miller, "Intellectuals and the State", p.56.

¹⁵⁶ José Ignacio Madrazo, "Historia y prehistoria de *Vuelta* /I", *Razones*, No.48, 2-15 Nov. 1981, pp.11, 14. *Libre* can be consulted in a facsimile edition, see Plinio Apuleyo Mendoza, (ed.), *Libre, revista de crítica literaria (1971-1972)*, (Madrid, 1992). Paz's memory appears to have been a little selective: his name was included as a collaborator in the four editions of the magazine. For the first issue, Paz submitted an article, "El simio gramático", and he, together with Fuentes, took part in a debate about the Padilla affair. (See pp.64-66, 131.)

Ibid., pp.ix-xi. Apuleyo Mendoza blamed differences of opinion among its contributors for the magazine's failure. He specified the Padilla affair, after which Paz, Fuentes, Mario Vargas Llosa, Juan Goytisolo and Jorge Semprún distanced themselves from the Cuban Revolution. Apuleyo Mendoza described Paz as "la remota paternidad" of *Libre*, and Juan Goytisolo as "el verdadero motor del proyecto". Fuentes' role in the magazine was not much greater than that of Paz. He submitted articles for the first and second editions only. (*Libre*, 1, Sept.-Nov. 1971, pp.51-63; *Libre*, 2, Dec. 1971-Feb. 1972, pp.21-32.)

¹⁵⁷ José Ignacio Madrazo, "Historia y prehistoria de *Vuelta* /II", *Razones*, No.49, 16-29 Nov. 1981, p.51. The first edition appeared in October 1971.

¹⁵⁸ Octavio Paz, "Declaración de *Plural*, El caso de *Excélsior*", *Siempre!*, No.1205, 28 July 1976, p.5.

¹⁵⁹ Stavans, "*Vuelta*", pp.215-216. Although Stavans was describing *Vuelta*, his comments can equally be applied to *Plural*. Attitudes may have hardened during the 1980s and 90s, but Paz would be the first to admit that the two magazines were one and the same. Indeed, Paz's stance can be traced to the 1930s: John King noted that Paz, a regular contributor to *Sur* from the mid-1930s, held the Argentine magazine in high esteem and that Paz's *Plural* and *Vuelta* had "much in common" with *Sur*. King admitted, "it is only when one considers names and current excluded from *Sur* [...] that the relative narrowness of its editorial policy becomes clear". The inability to embrace new ideas contributed to the magazine's decline. See, King, *Sur*, pp.79, 84, 171-172.

¹⁶⁰ The two remained on good terms despite the many articles against Paz published in Scherer's *Proceso*.

¹⁶¹ Madrazo, "Historia y prehistoria de *Vuelta* /II", pp.52-54; Stavans, "*Vuelta*", p.213. Nonetheless, the magazine did benefit from State funding. Stavans estimated that 30% of *Vuelta*'s advertisements were paid for by the government, but accepted that this figure was considerably less than other Mexican publications.

¹⁶² [N.A.], "Octavio Paz se lanzó contra el sandinismo", *Unomásuno*, No.2485, 7 Oct. 1984, p.17.

¹⁶³ Octavio Paz, "El diálogo y el ruido", *Vuelta*, No.96, Nov. 1984, pp.4-7.

¹⁶⁴ Ubaldo Díaz y Roberto Santiago, "Ligeras, las declaraciones de Octavio Paz, señalan 4 partidos", *Unomásuno*, No.2487, 9 Oct. 1984, p.4.

¹⁶⁵ Many authors, "229 profesores difieren de la posición de Octavio Paz sobre Nicaragua", *Unomásuno*, No.2489, 11 Oct. 1984, p.2. A letter from Walter Beller was co-signed by 22 academics who protested against Paz's comments. See, *La Jornada*, No.24, 12 Oct. 1984, p.8.

[N.A.], "La mortalidad de razonar", *Unomásuno*, No.2491, 13 Oct. 1984, p.3. This editorial stated that it was impossible to agree with Paz; those who did denied the 200 year struggle for Latin American independence.

¹⁶⁶ Horacio Labastida, "Pese a Paz, por Nicaragua", *La Jornada*, No.21, 9 Oct. 1984, pp.1, 11.

¹⁶⁷ Jorge G. Castañeda, "Octavio Paz, Nicaragua y México", *Proceso*, No.415, 15 Oct. 1984, pp.40-41. Castañeda pointed out that there were only three newspapers in Nicaragua; adding that one of them, *La Prensa*, was more critical of the Sandinistas than the Mexican media had been of the PRI.

¹⁶⁸ Díaz y Santiago, "Ligeras, las declaraciones de Octavio Paz", p.4. Former student leader, Eduardo Valle, of the Partido Trabajadores Mexicanos (PTM), described Paz's attitude towards the United States as servile.

Emmanuel D'Herrera, "El precio que pagó Octavio Paz", *Unomásuno*, No.2490, 12 Oct. 1984, p.2. D'Herrera praised Paz's action in 1968, but asserted the generation Paz had inspired was left orphaned and defrauded.

¹⁶⁹ [N.A.], "El de Paz, un discurso aparentemente pacifista", *La Jornada*, No.20, 8 Oct. 1984, p.18; René Avilés Fabila, "Octavio Paz: Ideas políticas que descalifican", *Excélsior*, No.24615, 13 Oct. 1984, p.7. Carlos Illescas claimed Paz went against his principles in the hope of obtaining a nomination; Avilés Fabila noted that Paz desperately wanted the Nobel Prize. Nonetheless, this seems an unlikely explanation: Paz was not obliged to comment on the situation in Nicaragua. Silence would surely have been a more diplomatic and astute move.

¹⁷⁰ [N.A.], "Abrumadora condena a las declaraciones de Octavio Paz contra la revolución nicaragüense", *Proceso*, No.415, 15 Oct. 1984, pp.50-51; La Torre, "¿Paz?", *Excélsior*, No.24613, 11 Oct. 1984, p.7. Hermann Bellinghausen, "Cortázar, Paz y el futuro infiel", *La Jornada*, No.34, 22 Oct. 1984, p.21. Bellinghausen drew attention to Abel Quesada's drawing of a crucified Paz embracing the inquisitorial fire.

¹⁷¹ See for example, Tulio H. Demicheli, "Paz y el espectáculo de las hogueras", *Unomásuno*, No.2499, 21 Oct. 1984, p.2; Edmundo González I. Iaca, "Octavio Paz. Borges sin gracia", *Excélsior*, No.24620, 18 Oct. 1984, pp.7, 8; Sonia Morales, "Los compositores que homenajearon a Paz: el arte es aparte", *Proceso*, No.417, 29 Oct. 1984, pp.44-46; Bellinghausen, "Cortázar, Paz", p.21.

Gabriel Zaid, [N.T.], *Vuelta*, No.96, Nov. 1984, p.4. Zaid denied that Paz's work was burned, but admitted that his effigy along with the couplet, "Reagan, rapaz, tu amigo es Octavio Paz" were set alight outside the US Embassy in Mexico City. Interestingly neither *La Jornada*, nor *Unomásuno* made a direct reference to the burning of Paz's effigy, perhaps they felt that addressing the issue would be seen as condoning with it.

¹⁷² Enrique Krauze, "Un sector confunde la democracia y la Inquisición", *Unomásuno*, No.2495, 17 Oct. 1984, p.2; Enrique Krauze, "Octavio Paz: Facing the Century. A Reading of *Tiempo nublado*", *Salmagundi*, Nos.70-71, Spring-Summer 1986, pp.157-159.

- ¹⁷³ Alberto Ruy Sánchez, "Un fantasma recorre América Latina: la democracia", *Vuelta*, No.96, Nov. 1984, p.53.
- ¹⁷⁴ Paz, "El diálogo y el ruido", pp.4-7.
- ¹⁷⁵ The Plan, proposed by Costa Rican President, Oscar Arias, sought to bring peace to Central America. The treaty called for an end to foreign aid to belligerent forces, for all sides to lay down their arms, and for elections to be held. To appease the United States, the Sandinistas were not invited to the discussions.
- ¹⁷⁶ Octavio Paz, "Contrarronda: México, Estados Unidos, América Central, etcétera", *Vuelta*, No.131, Oct. 1987, p.19.
- ¹⁷⁷ Miguel Angel Granados Chapa, "Plaza dominical", *La Jornada*, No.2187, 14 Oct. 1990, p.4.
- ¹⁷⁸ Carlos Fuentes, *Myself With Others*, (London), 1988, pp.4, 27.
- ¹⁷⁹ De Guzmán, *Carlos Fuentes*, p.62.
- ¹⁸⁰ Fuentes, *Myself With Others*, pp.4-5, 7.
- ¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*, pp.9, 11, 12.
- ¹⁸² *Ibid.*, pp.17, 19-20, 22; Carlos Fuentes, *Nuevo tiempo mexicano*, (México D.F., 1994), p.190. Fuentes stated that his father did not want him to enter the literary world, but this is by no means certain. Fuentes was named after his uncle, a poet and political essayist who died from typhoid at the age of twenty-one. Fuentes pointed out that his father never recovered from the pain of his brother's death, and named him Carlos as a "homage" to his memory. From an early age Fuentes was surrounded by books. When he first arrived in Mexico, Fuentes stayed with a family friend, writer Alfonso Reyes, a former member of the Ateneo de la Juventud, who introduced Fuentes to the classics.
- ¹⁸³ Gerald Martin, *Journeys Through the Labyrinth*, (London, 1989), p.258.
- ¹⁸⁴ José Joaquín Blanco, "Más allá de la lectura las intenciones monumentales", *La Cultura en México*, No.728, 20 Jan. 1976, p.xiii.
- ¹⁸⁵ José Donoso quoted by Van Delden, *Carlos Fuentes*, p.6.
- ¹⁸⁶ Ana María Larrain, "Carlos Fuentes: un escritor grande y elocuente", *Paula*, No.29, Sept. 1996, p.28.
- ¹⁸⁷ Fuentes's first collection of short stories, *Los días enmascarados*, was published in 1954. There followed a succession of novels set in Mexico: *La región más transparente* (1958); *Las buenas conciencias* (1959); *La muerte de Artemio Cruz* (1962); *Zona Sagrada* (1967) and *Cambio de piel* (1967).
- ¹⁸⁸ Toledo y Jiménez Trejo, *Creación y poder*, p.195.
- ¹⁸⁹ Boldy, "Carlos Fuentes", pp.156-157.
- ¹⁹⁰ Martin, *Journeys*, p.258. Fuentes wrote a lengthy essay about the student rebellions in Paris. See Carlos Fuentes, *Paris, la revolución de mayo*, (México D.F., 1968). President Díaz Ordaz apparently placed no obstacles against its publication.
- ¹⁹¹ Guillermo Ochoa, "Fuentes: Basta de Pentotal", *Excélsior*, No.18992, 4 March 1969, pp.1, 5.
- ¹⁹² Sanjuana Martínez, "Carlos Fuentes, en España, dice que nunca radicará permanentemente en México: Es difícil tener tiempo ahí para la creación literaria", *Proceso*, No.881, 20 Sept. 1993, p.54.
- ¹⁹³ Brewster, Interview with Poniatowska.
- ¹⁹⁴ Stephen Talbot, "Carlos Fuentes: Me desayuno a mis críticos", *Nexos*, No.136, April 1989, p.26.
- ¹⁹⁵ Van Delden, *Carlos Fuentes*, p.8.
- ¹⁹⁶ Nicholas Shakespeare, "Assertions of a nation's identity", *The Times*, 9 June 1986, p.19.
- ¹⁹⁷ Carlos Fuentes in conversation with John King, University of Warwick, 19 Sept. 1995. Monsiváis was also present at this rally. See, Javier Aranda Luna, "Los rituales del caos de Carlos Monsiváis", *Vuelta*, No.225, Aug. 1995, pp.39-40.
- ¹⁹⁸ Maarten van Delden, "Carlos Fuentes: From Identity to Alternativity", *Modern Language Notes*, 108 (1), 1993, p.334; [N.A.], "Fuentes, Puerto Rico y los Escritores Norteamericanos", *La Cultura en México*, No.371, 26 March 1969, p.xi.
- ¹⁹⁹ Jonathan Tittler, "Interview with Carlos Fuentes", *Diacritics*, 10, iii, Sept. 1980, p.53.
- ²⁰⁰ [N.A.], "Carlos Fuentes traduce a Nicaragua en Estados Unidos: Ernesto Cardenal", *Proceso*, No.607, 20 June 1988, p.48; Carlos Fuentes, "Carta a *Excélsior*", *Excélsior*, No.24689, 28 Dec. 1984, pp.4, 29. Fuentes explained that his audiences in the US were hostile and he was subject to aggressive interrogation. US conservatives of the far-right sent him threatening letters and insults. At home, García Cantú sustained a bitter and personal polemic with Fuentes. See Gastón García Cantú, "En el patio del poder, el poder de la palabra", *Excélsior*, No.24686, 24 Dec. 1984, pp.1, 21-23; Gastón García Cantú, "Respuesta a Carlos Fuentes", *Excélsior*, No.24692, 31 Dec. 1984, pp.1, 13; Gastón García Cantú, "Carlos: tu comedia ha terminado, enemigo de sí mismo", *Excélsior*, No.24694, 3 Jan. 1985, pp.1, 13, 27. For Fuentes's reply see, Fuentes, "Carta a *Excélsior*", pp.4, 29.
- ²⁰¹ [N.A.], "Octavio Paz se lanzó", p.17.
- ²⁰² Talbot, "Carlos Fuentes", pp.30-31.

- ²⁰³ Sanjuana Martínez, "Sin la rebelión Zapatista, el país seguiría dormido: Carlos Fuentes", *Proceso*, No.926, 1 Aug. 1994, p.23.
- ²⁰⁴ Fernando Fernández, "Carlos Fuentes", *Vice Versa*, No.2, Jan.-Feb. 1993, p.15.
- ²⁰⁵ David L. Middleton, "An interview with Carlos Fuentes", *The Southern Review*, Vol.22, No.2, April 1986, pp.342, 348-349, 354.
- ²⁰⁶ Carlos Fuentes, *Diana o la cazadora solitaria*, (Madrid, 1994), p.185.
- ²⁰⁷ Fuentes in conversation with King.
- ²⁰⁸ Franco, "The Critique of the Pyramid", p.58.
- ²⁰⁹ Fernando Benítez, "Vislumbre de Carlos Fuentes", *Sábado*, No.376, 28 Dec. 1984, p.3. Benítez explained, "todo ese [...] sirvió para que Carlos le diera coherencia y sentido al ex nazi muerto en la pirámide de Cholula".
- ²¹⁰ Beth Miller, "Interview With Elena Poniatowska", *Latin American Literary Review*, Vol.IV, No.7, Fall-Winter 1975, p.77.
- ²¹¹ Teresa Méndez-Faith, "Entrevista con Elena Poniatowska", *Inti: Revista de Literatura Hispánica*, No.15, Spring 1982, p.57.
- ²¹² Magdalena García Pinto, *Women Writers of Latin America: Intimate Histories*, (Austin, 1991), p.166.
- ²¹³ Elena Poniatowska, "El escritor y su compromiso: en lo personal, escribir ha sido pertenecer: pertenecer a un país, México", *La Cultura en México*, No.923, 28 Nov. 1979, p.iv.
- ²¹⁴ Elena Poniatowska, *Palabras cruzadas*, (México D.F., 1961). *Palabras cruzadas* is a compilation of some of her early work. For a more extensive collection see Elena Poniatowska, *Todo México*, Tomo I (México D.F., 1990); Tomo II (México D.F., 1993); Tomo III (México D.F., 1996); Tomo IV (México D.F., 1998).
- ²¹⁵ Cecilia Vargas Simón, "Las periodistas desplazan", *Razones*, No.48, 2-15 Nov. 1981, p.30.
- ²¹⁶ Jorgensen, *Engaging Dialogues*, pp.xi, 5.
- ²¹⁷ Elena Poniatowska, "Autoentrevista: Elena por Poniatowska", *La Jornada*, No.3965, 21 Sept. 1995, suplemento de cultura, p.12.
- ²¹⁸ Marco Antonio Campos, "Elena Poniatowska: No olvidar a los olvidados", *La Cultura en México*, No.2119, 2 Feb. 1994, p.49. In 1958 Poniatowska visited political prisoners who had been jailed following the railway workers' strikes. *Gaby Brimmer*, (México D.F., 1979), depicts the life of a woman with cerebral palsy; *Domingo siete*, (México D.F., 1982), is a collection of interviews with the seven candidates for the 1982 presidential election.
- ²¹⁹ Poniatowska depicted a fictionalised version of Palanceres's life in her first testimonial novel, *Hasta no verte, Jesús mío*, (México D.F., 1969). See also, Elena Poniatowska, "And Here's to You, Jesusa", in Doris Meyer, (ed.), *Lives on the Line: The Testimony of Contemporary Latin American Authors*, (Los Angeles, 1988), p.141. Poniatowska candidly described their relationship, recalling an incident in which she offered to help Palanceres with her chores. Readily admitting her inadequacy in being unable to complete them, she directly quoted Palanceres's unforgiving reaction: "Just look what a waste you are! One of those stuck-up women too good to get their hands dirty." Poniatowska explained: "Jesusa and I loved each other. She never stopped criticising me, but she never offended me."
- ²²⁰ *Ibid.*, p.152. Nonetheless, Palanceres did subsequently visit Poniatowska's home; it did not alter their relationship.
- ²²¹ Vargas Simón, "Las periodistas", p.31.
- ²²² Carlos Blanco y Jorge Sotomayor, "Los periodistas se juzgan", *Razones*, No.35, 4-17 May 1981, p.20.
- ²²³ Steele, *Politics, Gender*, p.149.
- ²²⁴ Miguel de la Vega, Héctor Rivera, Rosario Manzanos, Armando Ponce y Ana Cecilia Terrazas, "Encuesta sobre las elecciones entre 150 personajes de la cultura", *Proceso*, No.828, 15 Aug. 1994, p.59.
- ²²⁵ Armando Ponce, "Elena Poniatowska: 'Sin el impulso vital de las mujeres, este país se caería en pedazos'", *Proceso*, No.965, 1 May 1995, p.65.
- ²²⁶ Brewster, Interview with Poniatowska.
- ²²⁷ Bell Gale Chevigny, "The Transformation of Privilege in the Work of Elena Poniatowska", *Latin American Literary Review*, No.26, July-Dec. 1985, p.59.
- ²²⁸ Brewster, Interview with Poniatowska.
- ²²⁹ Jorgensen, *Engaging Dialogues*, p.65.
- ²³⁰ Kathy Taylor, *The New Narrative of Mexico*, (New Jersey, 1994) p.49.
- ²³¹ Beth Miller, "Interview with Elena Poniatowska", *Latin American Literary Review*, Vol.IV, No.7, Fall-Winter 1975, p.77.
- ²³² Poniatowska, "El escritor y su compromiso", p.ii.
- ²³³ Elena Poniatowska, "Marcos: quieren desaparecer a los indígenas; los creen un lastre", *La Jornada*, No.3556, 2 Aug. 1994, p.17.

- ²³⁴ Poniatowska, "El escritor y su compromiso", p. iv.
- ²³⁵ Campos, "Elena Poniatowska: No olvidar", pp.48-49.
- ²³⁶ Elena Poniatowska, "Carta al Señor Fernando Ortega", *Proceso*, No.506, 14 July 1986, p.58.
- ²³⁷ Elena Poniatowska, "No es que México sea mejor que otros países, es que México es inferior a su pasado", *La Cultura en México*, No.739, 6 April 1976, p.viii.
- ²³⁸ Stabb, *The Dissenting Voice*, p.14.
- ²³⁹ Linda Egan, "Entrevista con Carlos Monsiváis", *La Jornada Semanal*, No.137, 26 Jan. 1992, pp.18-19.
- ²⁴⁰ Kraniauskas, (ed.), *Mexican Postcards*, pp.xv-xvi.
- ²⁴¹ Carlos Blanco y Jorge Sotomayor, "Monsiváis y el periodismo de izquierda", *Razones*, No.37, 1-14 June 1981, p.17.
- ²⁴² Poniatowska, "Carlos Monsiváis: Las décadas", p.8.
- ²⁴³ De la Vega, Rivera, Manzanos, Ponce y Terrazas, "Encuesta sobre las elecciones", p.59.
- ²⁴⁴ Christopher Domínguez Michael, "Carlos Monsiváis en sus cincuenta años", *Proceso*, No.596, 4 April 1988, p.58.
- ²⁴⁵ Cynthia Steele, "Entrevista: Elena Poniatowska", *Hispanamericana Revista de Literatura*, No.53, 1989, pp.104-105.
- ²⁴⁶ Patricia Vega, "Dio permanencia a la memoria del 68 *La noche de Tlatelolco*", *La Jornada*, No.2502, 29 Aug. 1991, p.27.
- ²⁴⁷ Elena Poniatowska, "La universidad, barómetro moral del país", *Proceso*, No.160, 26 Nov. 1979, p.25.
- ²⁴⁸ José Emilio Pacheco, "Monsimarx, Monsimailer, Monsimad", *La Cultura en México*, No.475, 17 March 1971, p.xiii.
- ²⁴⁹ Steele, *Politics, Gender*, pp.148-149.
- ²⁵⁰ John King, Ana M. López, and Manuel Alvarado, (eds.), *Mediating Two Worlds: Cinematic Encounters in the Americas*, (London, 1993), p.139.
- ²⁵¹ Vicente Ayora y Oscar Palacios, "Entrevista a Carlos Monsiváis", *Sábado*, No.69, 10 March 1979, p.13.
- ²⁵² Adolfo Castañón, "Un hombre llamado ciudad", *Vuelta*, No.163, June 1990, p.19.
- ²⁵³ Egan, "Entrevista con Carlos Monsiváis", p.18. I would argue that Monsiváis is shy and elusive.
- ²⁵⁴ Carlos Marin, "El pleito *Vuelta-Nexos* prueba que la cultura mexicana está más viva que nunca", *Proceso*, No.807, 20 April 1992, p.48.
- ²⁵⁵ Kraniauskas, *Mexican Postcards*, p. ix.
- ²⁵⁶ Pacheco, "Monsimarx", p.xi
- ²⁵⁷ Ayora y Palacios, "Entrevista a Carlos Monsiváis", p.12.
- ²⁵⁸ Brewster, Interview with Poniatowska.
- ²⁵⁹ Fuego, "Marcos, Chiapas, Cuba", p.59.
- ²⁶⁰ Egan, "Entrevista con Carlos Monsiváis", p.18.
- ²⁶¹ Poniatowska, "Autoentrevista", p.13.
- ²⁶² [N.A.], "Aguafuertes de narrativa mexicana, 1950-1980", *Nexos*, No.56, Aug. 1982, p.36.
- ²⁶³ Elena Poniatowska, "Carlos Monsiváis: Las décadas en el espejo", *Nexos*, No.106, Oct. 1986, p.8.
- ²⁶⁴ Camp, "Intellectuals: Agents of Change in Mexico?", p.314.
- ²⁶⁵ Elena Poniatowska, "El movimiento estudiantil de 1968", *Vuelta*, No.7, June 1977, p.18.

2. The Student Movement of 1968

Ties between writers and President Díaz Ordaz (1964-70) were never strong. Monsiváis pointed out that the President viewed any criticism as a personal attack: "Para Díaz Ordaz jamás hay opositores, sólo conspiradores";¹ he was a "chauvinistic stone".² In 1965 Oscar Lewis's depiction of the life of the Mexican poor, *Hijos de Sánchez*, was deemed to be "denigrante para México"; its publisher, Arnaldo Orfila, was dismissed.³ In 1993 Monsiváis recalled "la histeria anti-intelectual" of Díaz Ordaz and his cabinet, but reflected that its paradoxical effect was to enrich Mexican cultural life: the events of his presidency stimulated a wealth of literature.⁴

The uneasy relationship would be stretched to its limits during the summer of 1968. It was not the first time that Díaz Ordaz had contended with civil unrest. He had been Minister of Internal Affairs during a series of strikes: railway workers (1958-59), teachers and oil workers, (1960), and telephone operators (1962), all of which were forcefully resolved. In 1965 doctors protested against poor pay and the increasing bureaucracy imposed by the government. The doctors were accused of being anti-patriotic; their demonstration through the streets of Mexico City was aggressively impeded. The press remained silent.⁵ In 1966 marches and strikes at UNAM, the reasons for which remain oblique, led to the resignation of rector Ignacio Chávez. The left-wing Chávez was accused of assisting the doctors' strike.⁶ Monsiváis described the affair as "un golpe orquestado por la Presidencia".⁷

The episode with which Díaz Ordaz would become inextricably associated and that would forever denigrate his presidency was the Student Movement of 1968.

Mexican students took to the streets to voice their discontent, in what Ronald Fraser saw as part of a world-wide phenomenon that "erupted with unforeseen suddenness in the 1960s to challenge the existing order of society".⁸ Focusing on Paris, however, Radhakrishnan stated that those who viewed May 1968 as a break with "all preexisting histories and historiographies" denied the efforts of the previous generation.⁹ Mexican student leader and member of Las Juventudes Comunistas, Pablo Gómez, would agree. For Gómez, the Student Movement was rooted in the national strike of 1956; the railway workers' movement two years later; the 1966 strike at UNAM and others throughout the Republic; demonstrations of solidarity with the Cuban Revolution, and against the US intervention in Vietnam. Such action had "un punto culminante precisamente en 1968".¹⁰ Gómez's concerns were mainly, though not exclusively, Mexican.

Conversely, twenty-five years after the event Paz stressed that a global perspective of the Mexican Student Movement had been lacking. He described, "una explosión universal y los ecos son numerosos", adding that the movement must be seen in the context of the Paris and Berkeley demonstrations.¹¹ Paz saw the wider scenario, tying the Mexican situation to events in other countries.¹² Yet Paz's and Gómez's views are not contradictory: the protests held elsewhere were, like those in Mexico, responses to national issues. Similar circumstances led to separate, but parallel counter-actions by youths throughout the world. Fraser noted that economic growth, high levels of employment, the maturation of the "baby boom", and improvements in technology had brought an expansion of higher education, in particular an increase of students from working class origins. In Mexico student numbers increased from 76,000 in 1960 to 247,000 in 1970. There were insufficient jobs for graduates and universities became

politicised with demands for social justice, jobs and improved living standards.¹³ A “youth culture” evolved that fostered a spirit of political activity. George Philip claimed that student life provided an opportunity for political activity that was not viable in other parts of Mexican society.¹⁴ As Tariq Ali stressed, “in a country where a dictatorship muffles all dissent and does not permit free assemblies, the universities become the main centre of political organisation”.¹⁵ Fraser acknowledged that participants tended to concentrate on local rather than global aspects and that the relationship between individual movements was not always conspicuous. He maintained, however, that universal techniques were adapted to suit local conditions.¹⁶ Certainly most of those who took to the streets in Mexico were aware of wider issues, as shown in their support of the Cuban Revolution and objection to the US presence in Vietnam. Moreover, events in the Caribbean and the Far East inspired those opposed to US imperialism.¹⁷ Crucially, the Mexican government took global affairs into consideration when assessing the scale of the unrest. Díaz Ordaz’s response would be shaped by the events in Paris; the civil rights demonstrations and student protests in the United States, and the world-wide manifestations against US involvement in Vietnam.

The short-lived, but momentous Mexican Student Movement began on 22 July 1968 following a clash between opposing student groups from the Polytechnic and from UNAM. It is rumoured that the dispute was triggered by rival gangs in the area. Some students were injured and buildings were damaged. Riot police (*granaderos*) were called to enforce order. The students then joined forces against the *granaderos*. There were several arrests and many were injured. Judith Hellman argued that the scale of brutality used against the students unified them.¹⁸ The University’s autonomy was soon deemed to be under threat.

On 26 July marches to celebrate the anniversary of the Cuban Revolution were staged. Confrontations took place as police denied access to the Zócalo; fighting spread to many central areas of Mexico City. The Mexican Communist Party headquarters were invaded and several members were arrested. In response, a Consejo Nacional de Huelga (CNH) was established to emphasise six demands:

1. Repeal of Articles 145 and 145b of the Penal Code.
2. The abolition of the *granaderos*.
3. Freedom of political prisoners.
4. Compensation to be paid to those injured during disturbances.
5. The identification of those officials individually responsible for bloodshed.
6. The dismissal of the chief of police, Luis Cueto, his deputy, Raúl Mendiola, and the commander of the *granaderos*, General A. Frías.¹⁹

Ricardo Garibay emphasised that these were not revolutionary proposals: rather than demand a change of the political system, the students were appealing to the government to act within the bounds of the Constitution.²⁰

By 30 July, military forces had attacked UNAM buildings; many were injured and arrested. Secretary for Internal Affairs, Luis Echeverría Álvarez, explained the government rationale:

Las medidas extremas adoptadas se orientan a preservar la autonomía universitaria de los intereses mezquinos e ingenuos, muy ingenuos, que pretenden desviar el camino ascendente de la Revolución Mexicana. [...] México se esfuerza por mantener un régimen de libertades que difícilmente se encuentra en otro país.²¹

It became increasingly apparent that order would be maintained at any cost. The world's attention was focused on the Republic: on 12 October 1968 the Olympic Games were scheduled to begin in the capital. Mexico was both the first Latin American

country and the first developing nation to host the event. A simultaneous "cultural Olympics" was planned to promote Mexico as a model of prosperity and stability.²² 1968 was denoted the Year of Peace. The government was determined to let nothing diffuse the spotlight. Popular objections to the vast amounts of money spent on staging the Games when so many Mexicans were living in poverty were swept aside: Díaz Ordaz would prove to the world that Mexico was a modern, wealthy country.²³ To draw attention away from internal strife, foreign, particularly French, agitators were blamed for the growing unrest.²⁴ Later those in power took the opportunity to denounce all those in opposition: Communists, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), Cubans, and even enemies of the President within his own party would be accused of manipulating the students.²⁵

The Army's intervention at UNAM strengthened the movement. Rector Javier Barros Sierra and other teachers joined forces with the students; on 13 August 150,000 to 200,000 people marched into the Zócalo, among them members of independent unions and non-affiliated Mexican citizens. There were calls for the release of political prisoners. Careful to emphasise that this was a national campaign, banners of revolutionary heroes were carried. Far from being against the system, the demonstrators demanded the fulfilment of the promises of the Revolution and the enforcement of the Constitution. On 22 August, Echeverría called for discussions to end "este lamentable problema".²⁶ The CNH, teachers and students insisted that all talks should be broadcast before the press, television and radio. As hopes of dialogue faded, the movement gathered momentum, La Asamblea de Artistas e Intelectuales and the Electricians' Union joined the protest. On 27 August, 300,000 people marched to the Zócalo; police, the Army and firemen were dispatched to remove demonstrators.

Following Díaz Ordaz's annual Address to the Nation on 1 September, Barros Sierra called upon students to return to their classes. He believed that the CNH demands had been satisfied in the presidential speech. There were calls for a return to "academic normality" by the end of the month. The students were unconvinced; on 13 September thousands of people marched in silence through the streets of Mexico City. CNH member, Luis González de Alba described its tremendous impact:

Parecía que íbamos pisoteando toda la verborrea de los políticos, todos sus discursos, siempre los mismos, toda la demagogia, la retórica, el montón de palabras que los hechos jamás respaldan, el chorro de mentiras; las íbamos barriendo bajo nuestros pies.²⁷

The government response was a full-scale military invasion of the University. On 18 September, after a prolonged battle in which some students died, the Army occupied part of the campus.

The government counteraction was heavily criticised in *Excelsior*; reports were generally sympathetic towards the students, and editorials demanded proof of the supposed outside agitators.²⁸ Abel Quesada used his regular cartoon space to illustrate his disagreement with government policy.²⁹ Barros Sierra protested vehemently against what he believed to be an unnecessary use of force. To distance himself from the government, on 23 September he resigned as Rector stating, "me manifesté públicamente como alguien que disentía de los actos y del estilo del gobierno".³⁰ His departure was not accepted and he was persuaded to return to his post. By 30 September, the Army had withdrawn from the campus and it seemed that the situation had eased. Quesada cautiously welcomed the situation.³¹

Inexplicably, tensions reached a bloody climax on the night of 2 October 1968.

A planned demonstration at Tlatelolco, Mexico City, ended in bloodshed and mass arrests. Details of the incident remain obscure: Mexican officials unanimously insisted that the students fired upon the police and the Army; government forces responded in self-defence. Survivors told a different story: the crowd had been infiltrated with government agents, easily identifiable by their white gloves; all exits to the plaza were blocked by tanks; a helicopter flew overhead shining lights onto the plaza; the Army then shot into the crowd.³² Many students and onlookers were killed, many more were injured, and thousands were arrested. Figures of the numbers of the casualties vary: the official statistics listed first eight, then eighteen, rising to forty-three dead. Michael Meyer and William Sherman claimed that most Mexicans believe that between 300 and 400 people were assassinated. Of the estimated 2,000 people imprisoned, over seventy remained in jail five years later. Eight soldiers died.³³

The massacre brought an abrupt end to the Student Movement, and left a generation devastated by death, imprisonment, exile and terror. John Rodda maintained that the movement "had the life snuffed out of it".³⁴ Paz immediately and publicly resigned his post as Ambassador to India. He was the only government official to protest.

Rumours abounded in the aftermath. Anthropologist Mercedes Olivera de Vázquez believed the attack had been planned in advance, but that the perpetrators lost control. Others concur that the *granaderos* took the initiative and, in the words of one student, "hubo un agente a quién le entró el cuscus y disparó. Por eso se desató todo."³⁵ Whether or not the soldiers took their orders to extremes, those who died were praised by Díaz Ordaz for having bravely stopped the students' armed aggression.³⁶ CNH

leader, Sócrates Amado Campos Lemus, was accused of betraying the student leaders to the authorities.³⁷ He was also depicted as a CIA agent with a mission to destabilise the Mexican government.³⁸ Campos Lemus strongly denied all charges, maintaining that US Ambassador Fulton Freeman had offered the Mexican Secretary of Defence, General Marcelino García Barragán, US support to bring down Díaz Ordaz's government.³⁹

The notion that the students had been manipulated continued. The "Conspiracy Theory", the government-sponsored propaganda that had appeared throughout the summer of 1968 that the students were controlled by foreign, Communist agitators, would periodically be reiterated at key points during the following decades. In 1976, former commander of the Mexico City armed forces, General Alfonso Corona del Rosal, reiterated: "no hubo línea dura, pero sí firme ante la dureza de la agresión y el terrorismo". He stressed that Díaz Ordaz had sought conciliation and put the interests of the people first. At Tlatelolco, he added, "la misión de las tropas era mantener tranquila la ciudad". Corona del Rosal maintained that the students opened fire on the Army, and that to blame the government and Army was "una verdadera trampa".⁴⁰ General José Hernández Toledo, himself wounded at Tlatelolco, went a stage further. Ten years after the event, he denied there had been any deaths at all that night.⁴¹ In 1977, Díaz Ordaz repeated his justification for his strong action: "Estoy muy orgulloso de haber ser Presidente. [...] Pero de lo que estoy más orgulloso de estos seis años es del año de 1968, porque me permitió servir y salvar al país."⁴² It was a stance that Díaz Ordaz would maintain until his death in July 1979, at the significant age of sixty-eight.

In September 1979, García Barragán's reflections of Tlatelolco were repeated in

his own obituary: "El 2 de octubre mutiló nuestros corazones.[...] Pero es probable que su lección nos sirva de indudable experiencia para no permitir que en el futuro gente perversa y traidores a la patria sigan corrompiendo a la juventud."⁴³ The then Secretary of Defence, Félix Galván López, described García Barragán as "un ciudadano ejemplar", indicating that the official version of events still prevailed in the Army. In 1994, conservative Luis Pazos dedicated his book, *¿Porqué Chiapas?*, to the students who died at Tlatelolco and to the indigenous people who were "sacrificed" in the uprising of January 1994.⁴⁴ All, in his opinion, were victims of the ambitions of others.

While President Díaz Ordaz may have temporarily silenced any opposition in Mexico, popular blame for the massacre was nonetheless attached to him.⁴⁵ Díaz Ordaz was aware of the situation: for the rest of his life he was in constant fear of assassination.⁴⁶ The government's use of force against Mexico's youth, among them future politicians and academics, caused long-term damage to the ties between writers and the State, dividing the intellectual community into those who followed the government and those who supported the students.⁴⁷ Monsiváis suggested the partition was fundamentally based upon age: "Perhaps ninety per-cent of young intellectuals and artists defended the Student Movement, and the old were for the president or the government. It was the most clear division I can recall. [...] The two exceptions were Octavio Paz and Carlos Fuentes who defended the students."⁴⁸ Monsiváis noted that Salvador Novo, David Siqueiros, and Martín Luis Guzmán were among those who endorsed Díaz Ordaz. On learning of the occupation of the university on 18 September, Novo stated: "es la primera buena noticia que recibo en el día". Siqueiros is reputed to have visited García Barragán on the morning of 2 October confirming, "he venido a reiterarle mi lealtad de revolucionario y amigo". On 7 June 1969, the ageing Guzmán

praised Díaz Ordaz for having resolved the conflict.⁴⁹ It is ironic that Guzmán, who had depicted his disillusionment with the Mexican Revolution in his novels, should endorse Díaz Ordaz's strategy against the students.⁵⁰ Significantly, in November 1968, Novo was named a member of the Consejo de la Agencia Mexicana de Noticias;⁵¹ Guzmán was praised by Díaz Ordaz.⁵² Both were working as "organic intellectuals" for the government and were swiftly rewarded for their efforts. What was the fate of those who did not? The four writers studied in this thesis all defended the students, but in different ways.

Carlos Monsiváis: The students' advocate

1968 transformó el país y organizó una nueva relación de una literatura profunda y comprometida. Carlos Monsiváis, 1973.⁵³

El olvido es imposible, la matanza no debe quedar impune. Carlos Monsiváis, 1981.⁵⁴

Monsiváis had close ties with students in Mexico City and followed the progress of the Student Movement with great interest:

I worked at the university, so I participated in many of the activities. We formed La Alianza de Intelectuales y Artistas en Defensa del Movimiento Estudiantil. We produced many manifestos and on Sundays held readings in the Ciudad Universitaria. [...] I organised the Student Movement radio programme. I wrote [the script] with information given to me by the students. In addition I produced a satirical radio programme very much in favour of the students. I was also coordinating *La Cultura de México*. We published many articles, essays and information on behalf of the Student Movement.⁵⁵

He was not alone: as its name suggests, the Alianza was a group effort designed to defend the students. Monsiváis viewed the students as acting within their constitutional

rights and applauded their decision to take to the streets, describing the demonstrations as “una de las más hermosas y estimulantes imágenes del México de los tiempos recientes”.⁵⁶ As jefe de redacción at *La Cultura en México* he was in a key position to act as the students’ organic intellectual, presenting their point of view and directing public opinion to support them. Although not a leader of the movement, he interpreted its messages to his readers, and elucidated its aspirations. Monsiváis was quick to identify the “represión armada” used by government. Angered and appalled by the force used against the students, he wrote extensively to express his views. In a strongly worded article he condemned the retaliation of 26 July:

La decisión violenta de dominio y autoridad deja de ser un acto de locura, una estupidez o un craso error político, para convertirse en factor esencial, orgánico de cualquier régimen democrático-totalitario, sin garantía de diálogo, sometido a la extrema presión de la extrema derecha.

Monsiváis stressed that the students’ protest was legitimate; their “crime” had been to march to the Zócalo. This public space in the heart of the capital had become, Monsiváis wrote, “propiedad exclusiva de nostalgias históricas y manifestaciones en apoyo del gobierno”. By choosing to protest there, the students put themselves at risk.⁵⁷

Monsiváis then examined the *granaderos*; strongly criticising the organisation as a whole and those who had joined it. He explained that members required, “un grave resentimiento social no formulado de modo coherente o racional”. The *granaderos*, he continued, represented the president’s base instincts and desires, freed from the constraints of protocol and the Constitution. Monsiváis placed responsibility for the “brutal y desmedida” reprisals firmly into the hands of whoever made the decision to use them. The unarmed students, he underlined, had staged a peaceful demonstration and had become “las víctimas naturales de [...] terror a lo no consentido o a lo no

autorizado por escrito".⁵⁸

His reaction to the use of repression of 26 July anticipated the still more "brutal and disproportionate" violence that would be employed by the government forces at Tlatelolco. Monsiváis had personally witnessed the students' activities and was sensitive to the tensions in Mexican society. He warned of the probability of further aggression. The student protesters, he explained, were generally from the middle classes; this increased the resentment of the repressive forces:

El rencor con que policías y granaderos vengaban su falta de oportunidades en la vida, con que policías y granaderos y agentes justificaban el buen juicio de sus empleadores que saben hasta qué punto el resentimiento elemental jamás podrá entender de solidaridad o de nobleza.⁵⁹

While not condoning the *granaderos'* action, Monsiváis did understand them. Their ranks were filled with members of the underclasses who, with only a hint of encouragement, would fiercely attack the more privileged sectors of society. Monsiváis, too, believed in the "conspiracy theory" yet, for him, it was not the students but the *granaderos* who were being manipulated.

Monsiváis illustrated how the political system rejected any form of dissent: "Nadie sino el Poder tiene voz, tiene movimiento y tiene ideas políticas. Poder es monopolio." Monsiváis was extremely critical of a government that denied its subjects their democratic rights; this, he claimed, proved the Revolution had ended: "Se ha convertido en el fantasma que recorre México, evocable a voluntad, argumento ominoso para sustituir la falta de ideas con la repetición ciega, mecánica y delirante de la misma ruinosa consigna." Moreover, the present coercion was part of a tradition of oppression. Monsiváis recalled other incidents against Mexican citizens: students in 1956, teachers

in 1958, workers in the petrol and railway industries in 1959. People had been regularly humiliated and imprisoned for their beliefs.⁶⁰

Monsiváis was particularly critical of journalists who failed accurately to report on the movement:

Nadie apeló a la legalidad, ningún periodista quiso enterarse de la existencia de una Constitución Política que desautorizaba los desmanes, motines y provocaciones de los granaderos y el ejército. Ningún reportero decidió como su deber mostrar las pruebas, por otra parte múltiples, de que no existía conjura alguna, de que los estudiantes no estaban armados, de que contra ellos se había ejercido la ilegalidad, la provocación y la virulencia física. Incapaces de informar críticamente, incapaces siquiera de informar, los periódicos en México - [...] no hubo excepciones - contribuyeron al lujo y la magnificencia de la Represión de Julio.⁶¹

Monsiváis's reaction, written in early August, and with the complete range of newspapers before him, indicates that he viewed *Excelsior*, singled out by Poniatowska and others for its stance after the Tlatelolco massacre, to be following the government guidelines.⁶² It was not until 14 August that the Student Movement hit the main headlines in *Excelsior*.⁶³ Believing that the press would not draw attention to the government intimidation, Monsiváis used his position at *La Cultura en México* to combat such partiality and to increase public concern.

As the Mexican government stepped up its response, so Monsiváis's support for the students grew. He was a founder member of the Asamblea de Intelectuales, Artistas y Escritores (AIAE) which officially joined the Student Movement on 16 August. Monsiváis described its aims: "Defender a la libertad de pensamiento de las acusaciones de subversión, denunciar la represión brutal de estudiantes y la campaña de

mentiras (“los atropellos y falsías”); ejercer la libertad de expresión, y describir los atropellos y falsías.”⁶⁴ The group had a nucleus of approximately twenty cultural figures, but could count on 500 signatures of support. Declarations in favour of the students were issued at weekly meetings; group members were a visible presence at the demonstrations. Monsiváis summarised the assembly’s attitude: “No sólo se trata de estudiar y aprender, sino de controvertir, cuestionar y refutar las ideologías enajenadas a estructuras pragmáticas de sistemas de poder nacional, donde el hombre ha sido olvidado y no tiene sitio alguno.”⁶⁵ Intellectuals played an important supportive role, lending their prestige to the students and working to further their cause.

Although he described the group’s name as “más bien pomposo”, Monsiváis believed that the AIAE served a useful purpose. Conversely, José Revueltas felt it took insufficient action. He proposed that members show solidarity with the political prisoners by joining their hunger strike, a measure that went beyond the call of duty for the majority. Revueltas promptly resigned from the group, explaining, “ya agoté mi cuota de vacilaciones y precisiones semánticas. A mí ahora me interesan las respuestas directas a la represión.” For Revueltas this was a time when direct action was more powerful than words. He joined the CNH and would suffer two and a half years imprisonment following the Tlatelolco massacre. In 1993, Monsiváis praised Revueltas’s “compromiso intelectual y moral” and his “acción la más perseverante”, but stressed “el trabajo de la Asamblea fue muy superior a su retórica”.⁶⁶ There was a clash of intellectual attitudes: Revueltas wanted to be an instrumental part of the movement, whereas Monsiváis believed that discussion could bring results. Although Monsiváis felt, and continued to stress, the importance of making declarations in favour of the students, Revueltas perceived the AIAE to be too passive and left the group to move to

the forefront of the protests.

In a synthesis of his roles as jefe de redacción of *La Cultura en México*, and coordinator of the AIAE, Monsiváis provided eyewitness, highly detailed reports of the demonstrations that took place on 13 and 27 August, and the "silent march" of 13 September. He claimed that the students had created a social conscience. One edition of *La Cultura en México* was entirely dedicated to the movement, providing an illustrated anthology of events from 23 July to 17 September. Although it did not bear his name, the issue had Monsiváis's characteristics: the captions for the photographs were excerpts taken from the press; there were quotations from students, government responses, and comments made in support of both sides. The author made no judgements, allowing the readers to draw their own conclusions. The many pictures chosen to illustrate the supplement, however, defied the image of "unruly" students: the Army and police were clearly depicted as instigating the violence.⁶⁷

On 18 September, responding to the government invasion of the university campus, Monsiváis described feelings of "impotencia o de rabia inútil".⁶⁸ While such phrases would often be repeated after 2 October, Monsiváis experienced sensations of horror and outrage before the massacre, and put them into print. He reiterated that the students were exposing the lies and deception upon which Mexican politics were based, and emphasised the historical precedents. The movement may have appeared to be spontaneous, but Monsiváis believed it was rooted in the failure of successive presidents since Lázaro Cárdenas to address Mexico's political and social problems in "una obsequiosa bruma sexenal":

La corrupción y la inutilidad, la ineficacia y la modificación de la estructura del poder en todos los órdenes, se veían ahora más grotescas, más

imposibles de justificación, más descaradamente anacrónicas. El Movimiento lo había descubierto: un gobierno no se construye jamás por acumulación de órdenes, por suma indiscriminada de poses fulmineas. Y esa sabiduría política [...] se acrecía y multiplicaba ante la vista de esas bayonetas que personalizaban una anonimia implacable, ante esos gritos injuriosos de quienes veían en los estudiantes únicamente a los vencidos, para ser consecuentes con la idea de política como doma, amansamiento, puerilización colectiva.⁶⁹

Although the term was yet to become fashionable in Mexico, Monsiváis was describing the birth of civil society. He perceived the entire Mexican political system to be in decay, held together only by force. The Student Movement, he continued, aimed to renovate the structure of government by insisting on “el predominio de la razón sobre la fuerza”. Monsiváis called for a defence of the university and the recreation of its “asesinada Autonomía”. These words, written on 18 September, appeared in the 2 October 1968 edition of *La Cultura en México*. The tragic coincidence of the date intensifies the power of his words.

In Monsiváis's last article about the Student Movement before the massacre, he discussed the proposed return to “normalidad académica” at the end of September. He feared that the movement would be erased in a general attitude of “aquí no ha pasado nada”. This, he emphasised, was far from the case, the students had transformed the country: “Una generación se ha decidido a no seguir el triste conformista ejemplo de los anteriores.” The movement's major achievement was “la creación de una verdadera conciencia nacional”. Monsiváis reminded his readers of those still incarcerated for their beliefs; among them Demetrio Vallejo and Valentín Campa, and the many imprisoned after protests to free them. He added “es responsabilidad académica” to demand their release. Evidently Monsiváis felt intellectuals should build upon the

changes to the political climate created by the students. Moreover, Monsiváis hoped the return to "normalidad académica" would herald "el combate permanente por la democratización del país" and that the Student Movement would mark the beginning of popular political participation. He called for more openness to foster an awareness about concerns of national importance, "ya no enmascarada [la] realidad de México".⁷⁰ Monsiváis was determined that the movement should endure and called upon intellectuals to play their part.

If, in his first reports of the Student Movement, Monsiváis had been almost prophetic in his emphasis on the potential threat of government violence, his last was poignantly disproved. Far from removing the mask from Mexican reality, the events of 2 October were placed beneath an obscure shroud. Immediately after the massacre, Monsiváis did his utmost to guarantee that the public was aware of what had happened. He recalled that the AIAE met in an atmosphere of fear and pain. Monsiváis helped to draft a letter of protest that was taken to the *Excélsior* offices by three members of the group. One of them, novelist Juan García Ponce who bore a slight resemblance to the student leader Marcelino Perelló, was arrested and held for several hours. He was released after Julio Scherer intervened.⁷¹ The incident demonstrates the authorities' desperation to round up the student leaders following the massacre. It would not have required much intelligence to establish that wheelchair bound García Ponce was not the able-bodied Perelló. It also illustrates Scherer's influence: he was able to secure Ponce's freedom in such a tense climate. The AIAE letter, published in *Excélsior* on 5 October, stressed that the Tlatelolco meeting had been peaceful and ordered; the Army had fired on the crowd with neither warning nor provocation. It ended, "elevamos la más enérgica protesta por tan injustificable acto de represión".⁷² As jefe of *La Cultura*

en México, Monsiváis ensured that the extent of the government reprisal was told in full: "We were the first to publish a protest against the Tlatelolco killings."⁷³ *Siempre!* and its cultural supplement provided reports of the "unofficial" version of the movement's abrupt end. Members of the editorial board publicly supported Paz's resignation.⁷⁴

Yet Monsiváis did not repeat the critical denunciations of the government he had made before the massacre; he adopted a more distanced perspective, taking refuge, perhaps, in the past. He stressed the tradition of tampering with Mexican history; officially sanctioned records differed from reality:

Esa historia oficial, más hecha de consignas que de ideas, más habituada al gesto declamatorio y a la solemnidad pétrea que a la actualización y vigorización de las ideas, define nuestra realidad actual como la suma infinita de conquistas que provienen de una interminable sesión de box.⁷⁵

According to authorised sources, he continued, the presidency of Lázaro Cárdenas ended these boxing matches and official stability began. This, Monsiváis emphasised, denied the history of Mexican society; in particular of those who refused to conform. The survivors of Tlatelolco, described as, "una generación víctima de una tenebrosa represión", had witnessed "la incapacidad oficial para captar la rebeldía". Monsiváis depicted the sense of hopelessness after the Student Movement's end, but "captar" may also indicate optimism. The government may not have understood the rebellion, but nor had it controlled it.⁷⁶ The *granaderos* and the Army may have prevailed in a bloody, vicious battle, but they had not won the war. Like Monsiváis's message, the movement had been subdued, but it was not conquered. Monsiváis was perhaps deliberately ambiguous, his position was precarious: those who had supported the students anticipated arrest and torture. He had strongly criticised the government throughout the summer. Another of his articles published at this time was illustrated by a large

photograph of Paz with the caption, "Paz: la conciencia nacional".⁷⁷ The force of the heading would not have been lost on Monsiváis's readers, although the picture had little relevance to the text. While not directly addressing it, Monsiváis emphasised that the massacre was still very much in his mind, and that Paz had been the only government official to protest against it.

The difficulty in discussing political matters after October 1968 cannot be overstated. In 1981, Monsiváis recalled the active support of *La Cultura en México* for the students.⁷⁸ Since its foundation in 1962, the magazine had voiced critical comment.⁷⁹ Directed by Fernando Benítez until 1970, it was a forum for writers such as Fuentes, Monsiváis, and José Emilio Pacheco.⁸⁰ Monsiváis paid tribute to the role adopted by Benítez during the summer of 1968; in particular his article, "Los días de la ignorancia" (sic)⁸¹ a strong condemnation of the role of the Army and the police at Tlatelolco. Benítez, in turn, praised Director General, José Pagés Llergo, for giving the editors freedom to publish as their consciences directed. In 1987 Benítez commented: "no fuimos a la cárcel porque Pagés nos defendió".⁸² Although Benítez provided no further details, he revealed the precarious position of those in Mexico who criticised Díaz Ordaz's regime. Yet, like Scherer, Pagés Llergo had been able to offer some protection to his employees. Evidently the government could not afford fully to alienate its leading editors.

There was also an emotional price to pay. Disturbed and distressed by the events at Tlatelolco, Monsiváis was unable to continue his work at *La Cultura en México*.⁸³ Within two weeks of the massacre, Pacheco had taken over as coordinator.⁸⁴

Monsiváis published only three articles for the rest of the year, compared to the profusion of the preceding months. As has been discussed, Monsiváis's tone was subdued and his messages were ambiguous. It was not until March 1972 that Monsiváis returned as director of *La Cultura en México*; he then submitted weekly articles.

When he did write, Monsiváis used sarcasm to convey his rationale. In December 1968 he made several awards to outstanding personalities, among them:

Premio "Mahatma Gandhi" al Gral. José Hernández Toledo quien declaró en el hospital el 3 de octubre: "Si querían sangre derramada, con la que yo he perdido es bastante".

Premio "Todo es Punible en la Paz" a la periodista italiana Oriana Fallacci cuya labor miserable de calumnia y desprestigio de México llegó al grado de inventar la existencia de un sitio llamado Tlatelolco.

La Declaración Que no Admite Dudas: "La intervención de la autoridad, en la Plaza de las Tres Culturas, acabó con el foco de agitación que ha provocado el problema". - Fernando M. Garza, director de Relaciones Públicas de la Presidencia, a los periodistas extranjeros.

La Frase Del Año: "México es un país donde la libertad impera y seguirá imperando". - Gral. Marcelino García Barragán (3 de octubre).⁸⁵

Although he did not honour Díaz Ordaz, Monsiváis nominated leading members of the armed forces and quoted them directly. Monsiváis made no judgement other than his awards. The exception was Fallacci who had been wounded at Tlatelolco and whose graphic account of the night of 2 October was widely reported in the foreign press. Monsiváis took the Mexican government's denial of Fallacci's experience to extremes: the very existence of Tlatelolco was a figment of her imagination. The choice of technique was astute: there could be no doubt of Monsiváis's true meaning, and his subjects were condemned by their own words.

In December 1970, significantly as Díaz Ordaz left office, Monsiváis's *Días de guardar* was published: a reflection upon the development of Mexican society in the 1960s, its economic growth, and the expansion of the middle class. The Student Movement was the focal point:

Lo que ocurrido en Tlatelolco divide definitivamente el proceso de la vida mexicana. [...] Un acto represivo ilumina un panorama por esa virtud de las situaciones límite que esencializan y concentran. 1968, dice Octavio Paz, fue un año axial. Nos explicó al país del modo sustantivo, nos despojó de la adjetivación.⁸⁶

Even in the uncertain, despondent days of 1970, Monsiváis was aware of the movement's tremendous impact. Beneath its facade of stability and progress the Mexican political system had turned against its citizens. Behind the democratic rhetoric, "hay un contexto de caos económico, de despilfarro administrativo, de corrupción, de miseria campesina, de irrisión electoral, de desempleo masivo, de asesinatos impunes y presos políticos".⁸⁷ Monsiváis was nonetheless reservedly optimistic: things could only get better.

A short account of 2 October 1968 was included, but Monsiváis focused upon 2 November, the Day of the Dead. Relatives and friends of those who had died and disappeared, along with those who lived in Tlatelolco, defied the presence of police and *granaderos* and placed flowers and placards in the Plaza de las Tres Culturas. Monsiváis gave a factual reconstruction of the events of 2 October interspersed with these messages: "No los olvidaremos", "La Historia los juzgará". He neither provided an analysis nor apportioned blame, merely reiterating the words of García Barragán (winner of Monsiváis's "saying of the year"): "El comandante responsable soy yo. No se decretará el estado de sitio. México es un país donde la libertad impera y seguirá

imperando.” To this he added the words of Garza (recipient of Monsiváis’s *La Declaración Que no Admite Dudas*): “La intervención de la autoridad ... acabó con el foco de agitación que ha provocado el problema ... Se garantiza la tranquilidad durante los Juegos Olímpicos. Hay y habría vigilancia suficiente para evitar problemas.”⁸⁸ As in “Los premios del 68”, those Monsiváis believed to be responsible were condemned by their own words.

Pacheco claimed that *Días de guardar* “marca la aparición de Carlos Monsiváis el escritor, a diferencia del ‘Carlos Monsiváis’ la celebridad y la figura pública”. Pacheco clarified that Monsiváis explored “algunas zonas de la realidad mexicana en que sociólogos y novelistas aún no se aventuran”. He explained that this was not an easy task: “Habitamos una época en que cada vez resulta más difícil continuar escribiendo.” The Student Movement was difficult to address because it was a painful episode, the facts were still obscure, and those who wrote about it did in fear of reprisals. Monsiváis, Pacheco noted, was trying to be positive: “Contempla de frente y por el camino de la crítica y el sarcasmo transforma la tentación de la desesperación en la voluntad de que cosas sean distintas mañana.”⁸⁹ *Días de guardar* ended with Díaz Ordaz leaving office. Monsiváis depicted, “una atmósfera de arco iris generalizado, borrón y cuenta nueva, buenos propósitos y dictámenes ponderados sobre la conclusión de una crisis - ‘lamentable pero pasajera’- de nuestras instituciones.”⁹⁰ The change of president enabled Monsiváis to face the future. He did so with sarcasm and humour: his defence and means of survival.

Twenty-five years later, Monsiváis stressed that the part played by artists and intellectuals in the Student Movement was “muy significativa”.⁹¹ Although not among

its leaders, they ensured that the cause was placed and remained in the public arena; Monsiváis was at the forefront.

Elena Poniatowska: The victims' confidant

El movimiento estudiantil [...fue] la más grande movilización independiente de la historia contemporánea de México. [...] Algo se perdió irremediablemente en 1968 (la muerte es siempre irrecuperable) pero algo se ganó. Elena Poniatowska, 1978.⁹²

Like Monsiváis, Poniatowska followed the Student Movement with interest, but was less involved as she had just given birth to her second son. She nonetheless attended some meetings, knew many of the student leaders, and her brother Jan took part in the protests. Also in common with Monsiváis, Poniatowska was angered by the presence of the Army at UNAM; she, too, wrote articles in support of the students.⁹³ She spoke those involved, deliberately tailoring her questions to calm her readers' fears while maintaining an apparently neutral position. In August 1968, Poniatowska interviewed philosophy lecturer, Dr Ricardo Guerra. She frequently repeated his title, the importance of which would not have been lost on those who held academic qualifications in high esteem. Reflecting middle-class concerns, she asked Guerra why the students were defending the political prisoners: surely this had nothing to do with further education? He replied that freedom of thought and expression must prevail. Poniatowska pressed Guerra: "¿Por qué entonces no se opone la UNAM sistemáticamente a todas las injusticias y a toda la corrupción que hay en la República?" Behind the speculation of the curious position of the university, Poniatowska stressed that there were persistent and widespread vices in Mexico. Guerra's reply, that those involved in the movement were determined to stay within institutional bounds, underlined the legitimacy of the students' action.⁹⁴

Poniatowska then raised the issue of the inevitability of government reprisals: “¿No resulta ingenuo pedir la destitución del cuerpo de granaderos y del jefe de la Policía Cueto, y de Mendiola - aunque sean ellos inmediatamente responsables - si después se puede formar otro cuerpo policiano represivo, igual al de los granaderos, sólo sin otro nombre?” By providing the names of the chief of police and his deputy, Poniatowska accentuated the accusations against them, and warned that police brutality was endemic. Her stance was stronger than Guerra's: Poniatowska condemned the police whereas Guerra merely stated that the protesters were appealing to the Mexican Constitution to protect their rights.⁹⁵

Articulating the views of those who might believe that the teachers had been pressured into joining the dispute, Poniatowska then asked, “ustedes, los maestros, los adultos ¿a quiénes le tienen miedo, a los estudiantes o al gobierno? ¿Se encuentran ustedes entre la espada y la pared?” Guerra's response was again designed to clarify any misunderstandings of the protests. He stressed there was no reason for anyone to fear the students: “No puedo hablarse de miedo en la medida en que el gobierno aplique y respete el orden jurídico constitucional del país”. Guerra indicated that the government, and not the students, was in breach of the law.

As the interview closed, Poniatowska's 'neutral' stance slipped: “Concretamente se han dicho [algunos editorialistas] que los estudiantes se escudan en la autonomía para cometer barbaridad y media y aunque eso es falso, quisiéramos que diera usted su opinión.” Poniatowska refuted these press reports and invited Guerra to do likewise. Guerra had already clarified his beliefs and Poniatowska clearly accepted his explanation of the importance of autonomy at UNAM; her use of “we” implies that

she was directing her readers to concur. She then explored the issue of Communist involvement, adding an influential subtitle: "Los comunistas, chivos expiatorios" emphasising that there was no substance to such rumours. Again, Guerra did not need to respond. The accompanying photographs supported Guerra's stance that this was a legitimate movement: Rector Barros Sierra, together with members of his staff sympathetic towards the students, were shown at a respectable, business-like meeting; an orderly gathering of the Consejo Universitario was depicted. Further pictures showed a rally at UNAM, with an attentive audience; and a demonstration at which a well-behaved crowd carried banners and placards.⁹⁶

The following week Poniatowska described a series of photographs that had appeared in the Spanish press. She stated that the pictures were, "extraordinaria desde el punto de vista documental; espeluznante desde el punto de vista moral". Poniatowska directed her readers to share her horror and disgust, explaining that they showed school children, no more than thirteen years old, being threatened by a soldier carrying a bloody bayonet. A student implored the soldier to stop. Beside them a photograph of Barros Sierra had the caption, "El rector dando pruebas de valor y rectitud, encabeza el pacífico desfile".⁹⁷ Poniatowska wrote that the author of the article noted the Army's excessive use of force. In drawing attention to this report, Poniatowska made two unspoken but nonetheless powerful points: firstly this was how the Student Movement was portrayed abroad; secondly, the situation was evidently more serious than was being shown within the country, such scenes had not appeared in the national press. On the eve of the Olympic Games, the Mexican government might try to diminish the scale of domestic concerns, but a different picture was emerging abroad. Poniatowska then focused upon one student, Daniel Castro del Valle, who worked in the UNAM press

department. A photograph of the neatly dressed Castro was included. Castro explained that the students had no faith in Mexican newspapers; only two publications had provided unbiased reports: *Siempre!* and *¿Por Qué?*. Without ostentatiously stating that Mexican editors were creating a false impression of the Student Movement, Poniatowska led her readers to question the portrayal of the movement as seen in most of the press. She was also, perhaps unknowingly, revealing the images that shaped the perceptions of Mexicans living abroad in 1968, among them Paz and Fuentes. In the light of the report in the Spanish press, and the words of Castro, distance may have given a clearer understanding of what was happening in a country that provided inaccurate press coverage. Poniatowska tried to undermine this censorship.

Although her essays concerning the Student Movement appeared in the more impartial *Siempre!* and its supplement, *La Cultura en México*, Poniatowska also, albeit subtly, promoted the students' cause in the conservative daily, *Novedades*. As discussed in chapter one, Poniatowska was aware that there were spaces in which to express dissent in an acceptable form. Management of the press was haphazard, human error and lethargy assisted social critics.⁹⁸ Rather than mention the current unrest in *Novedades*, Poniatowska criticised the government by looking back to an earlier student dispute that had ended without force. In an attempt to make *Novedades* readers question the use of the Army and *granaderos*, she quoted a letter, dated November 1967, in which students stressed that they were struggling for a cause they believed to be just.⁹⁹ Poniatowska's unspoken point was that the present disturbances could also be peacefully resolved.

Although she did not personally witness it, Poniatowska was deeply affected by

the Tlatelolco massacre. If she had have been there, she stated, she would have been unable to write about it: "Se necesita perspectiva, objetividad, lejanía para contar cosas tan tremendas." Poniatowska learned of what had happened from a friend: "Primero pensé que exageraba pero luego [...] me fui a Tlatelolco: vi los vidrios rotos,[...] los elevadores donde se veían los impactos de las balas, manchas de sangre en la piedra. Empecé a apuntar todas esas cosas, pero sin pensar que estaba preparando un libro."¹⁰⁰ Like Monsiváis, Poniatowska no longer felt able to address the students' cause so extensively after the massacre. She did, however, continue her journalistic work. On 17 October Poniatowska summarised the work of Mariana Yampolsky who was photographing the Olympic Games. She claimed that Yampolsky was asked by the overseas press why she was not covering the student conflict. Poniatowska, herself, stepped in to provide the answer:

No es que a Mariana no le duela - como a todos nos duelen - los lamentables acontecimientos de las últimas semanas, sino que su actitud positiva, hacia este evento deportivo y cultural por primera vez en un país de habla española, le permite destacar con gran fuerza todo lo que muchos periodistas extranjeros no han sabido ver y apreciar, por lo menos, hasta el momento.¹⁰¹

Poniatowska voiced regret: what should have been a time of national pride was overshadowed by the government repression. Again emphasising perceptions of Mexico abroad, Poniatowska questioned the appropriateness of covering such an event given the political situation. By responding for Yampolsky, Poniatowska was, perhaps, defending her decision to write a 'trivial' article only two weeks after the massacre; when the fate of many who had been at Tlatelolco was unknown. Although emphasising that she suffered the pain of the events of the last few weeks, Poniatowska chose to write about the Games. Terrible things had happened, but there was good in the country too. She did not want the government to mar the sporting and cultural

achievements of the nation.¹⁰²

A year after the bloodshed, however, Poniatowska voiced feelings of sorrow, despair and inadequacy:

Creo que todos nos hicimos viejos, viejos después de lo de Tlatelolco. [...] Siento que no hacemos nada, que nadie se mueve. Me siento cómplice por impotencia. Vivimos en 1968 un hecho de ignominia: Tlatelolco, y nos quedamos a un lado, parados en la tierra, inútiles, junto a nuestros muertos. [...] ¿En dónde está nuestra indignación, nuestra rebeldía?¹⁰³

These comments were made while Poniatowska was preparing her own indignant, rebellious response: *La noche de Tlatelolco* was her testimony to the Student Movement. Her graphic portrayal of the spirit and events of 1968 would prove to be a powerful remedy for Poniatowska's perceived impotence.

La noche de Tlatelolco was a much stronger stance than information slipped into the press: it directly contradicted the government's "conspiracy theories", and its insistence that the students had begun the violence at Tlatelolco. There were considerable efforts to prevent its publication. The publishing house, ERA, was the target of bomb threats, but its manager, a veteran of the Spanish Civil War, refused to be intimidated and the book was launched in 1971.¹⁰⁴ Poniatowska was kept under surveillance. Her response was disarming. She recalled, "they put a car outside my house to watch what I was doing, but I took coffee out to the occupants and said, poor things, you must be bored".¹⁰⁵

Poniatowska's links with the students and her articles in favour of the movement enabled those in prison to trust her. On Sundays she visited Lecumberri Prison in which

most of the students were detained. Using an assumed name, she was admitted as a visitor to Gilberto Guevara Niebla. Afterwards, Poniatowska would record the prisoners' testimonies as faithfully as she could.¹⁰⁶ The result was a multitude of voices that revealed the positive effects of the movement and the feelings of solidarity, followed by the horror of the massacre. The former, the students believed, was as important as telling the truth of the appalling events at Tlatelolco. There was a fear that the abrupt and brutal end of the movement would prevail, rather than the beauty of the hope of change it had generated.

The book opens with a thirty-page section of photographs, taken from the press, depicting the movement's history. Below them, short explanations outline the course of events. Half the pictures show the demonstrations with close focus given to the banners carried; a brigadier collects money from middle-class women; two jubilant youths triumphantly strike the cathedral bell in the Zócalo (it is stressed that they had obtained permission). Photographs of two men follow: the first, Díaz Ordaz, has an inscription taken from his speech of 1 August 1968: "Hay que restablecer la paz y la tranquilidad pública." In the second, Barros Sierra appears compassionate and concerned; his words of 19 September 1968 form the caption: "La ocupación militar de la Ciudad Universitaria ha sido un gesto excesivo de fuerza que nuestra casa de estudios no merecía." The ensuing pictures chart the escalation of violence: demonstrators carrying placards objecting to the injuries sustained by Heberto Castillo and the disappearance of many youths; defenceless protesters being detained by heavily armed uniformed soldiers; mothers mourning the death of their children; the crowd at Tlatelolco during the afternoon of 2 October 1968; tanks and armed soldiers blocking the exits at the Plaza de las Tres Culturas; shoes, handbags and leaflets littering the square on the

morning of 3 October 1968; corpses laid out at the mortuary; close focus is given to the body of a young boy with the caption, "¿quién ordenó esto?"; crowds of young men detained in prison; finally the vigil at Tlatelolco on 2 November 1968, with men, women and children kneeling at the Plaza amid flowers and candles. With the minimum of words, Poniatowska provided a powerful reconstruction of the Student Movement, directing her readers to feel shocked and horrified at the scale of the government's response against such young, unarmed protesters.

The text of *La noche de Tlatelolco* is divided into two sections in an effort faithfully to reproduce the "summer of 68". The first details individual reasons for joining the movement, the marches, the camaraderie, the chants and expectations. The second describes the night of 2 October and includes events up to December. Those who had survived Tlatelolco were living in fear. Many were arrested or "disappeared". Tragedy also directly hit Poniatowska: on 8 December 1968 her brother Jan was killed in a car accident. *La noche de Tlatelolco* and many of Poniatowska's other books are dedicated to his memory. It is widely believed that Jan Poniatowska Amor was killed at Tlatelolco.¹⁰⁷ This inaccuracy might lead one to suppose that the impulse for *La noche de Tlatelolco* was Poniatowska's need to avenge her brother's death, thus diminishing her genuine support for the movement as a whole.

Poniatowska emphasised how life nonetheless continued after the massacre: "El mismo 2 de octubre pasaban al lado de la Plaza de las Tres Culturas taxis, ciclistas, peatones, como si nada hubiera ocurrido." Margarita Nolasco was outraged: "Me agarró una especie de ataque de histeria y empecé a gritar: '¡Están masacrando a la gente en Tlatelolco!'" Student Enrique Vargas initially thought that Mexicans would

take up arms to avenge the deaths: "Cuando vi que todo seguía igual, que nadie se movía, fue el choque más grande de mi vida."¹⁰⁸ La Plaza de las Tres Culturas is a small square in a vast city; however, its position in a large residential area guarantees that those living nearby would have heard the prolific gunfire. Even with strong censorship, news of the massacre would have quickly spread. Poniatowska felt that shock and fear led to a denial of what had happened.¹⁰⁹ The reality was so horrific that no-one wanted to believe it; the government's disavowal that anything had occurred strengthened this conviction. Eduardo de la Vega had been imprisoned before the massacre; that night a guard told him that many students had been killed, warning him not to tell anyone. De la Vega's reaction was of disbelief; he decided not to wake his companions: "A mí me parecía uno de tantos y tantos rumores que llegaban hasta nosotros. Además, NO PODIAN matar a los muchachos en un mitin al cual todos iban pacíficamente, eso NO PODIA OCURRIR."¹¹⁰ If someone who had been actively involved in the protests and was at the time suffering government repression as a consequence, felt that the government was incapable of such action, then it is hardly surprising that others found it inconceivable. Poniatowska emphasised that the only death certificates issued at Tlatelolco were for two soldiers. The affair was and has remained, deliberately embroiled in confusion to lessen its impact: "Si uno relee la prensa de ellos días verá que los muertos son mencionados con cifras, números, nunca con nombre y apellido."¹¹¹ In *La noche de Tlatelolco*, Poniatowska strove to rectify this by supplying the names and personal details of those involved.

Lack of information notwithstanding, Poniatowska acknowledged that Mexicans were soon left in no doubt of the truth of the event: "A pesar del partidismo de la prensa, los pequeños espacios de excepción bastaron para fincar el descrédito del

Diazordacismo. Con unos cuantos periodistas y con el mínimo de espacio se impidió que la versión de Gustavo Díaz Ordaz prevaleciera."¹¹² Poniatowska testified to the power of the small spaces through which the truth of Tlatelolco became apparent despite the considerable efforts to silence the tragedy. As a result, Díaz Ordaz was discredited while he was still in office, and Mexican society was made aware of the horror of 2 October 1968.

The publication of *La noche de Tlatelolco* unleashed more memories and emotions that had been suppressed. Poniatowska explained, "las gentes me llamaban para decirme: 'Pues fíjese que yo tengo muchas cosas que contarle...' o 'yo estuve en Tlatelolco y le puedo decir tal y cual cosa...' O bien 'yo sé la verdad del movimiento, yo puedo explicárselo...'"¹¹³ Gabriel Zaid paid tribute to Poniatowska's courage: "¿Qué bueno que haya tenido el valor de enfrentarse al espejo de esa noche horrenda, durante meses, durante años, recomponiendo la explosión en la memoria colectiva!"¹¹⁴ Poniatowska's work was in many ways beneficial: it told a story that was denied by the government, it gave a voice to those in prison, and enabled many to talk about their experience, secure in the knowledge that they were not alone in their suffering.

Its unusual structure has made the book the object of much critical discussion. Ronald Christ debated whether to classify it as "history" or "fiction", concluding that it lies somewhere between the two "with a disturbing and enlightening confusion".¹¹⁵ Eugenia Meyer's analysis was more assured: "[*La noche de Tlatelolco*] brings everything together: the interviewer's technique, the journalist's skill, the witness's anguish and courage, and a deeply legitimate desire as a Mexican, a woman and a mother, to recover the memory and meaning of what had happened."¹¹⁶ In the book,

Poniatowska's observations and recollections bear only the inscription "E.P."

Jørgensen explained the significance: "It makes the figure of the editor visible to the reader and establishes her authority. But [...] by announcing that "here I am", "I wrote this", [...] implies that she is absent from the great majority of the document, that she didn't intervene in a hundred other places."¹¹⁷ Poniatowska's main contributors were those directly affected by the tragedy; she was merely the means through which their stories were told. She provided names and sufficient personal details to indicate her informants' association with the Student Movement: students, teachers, parents, neighbours, newspaper reporters, photographers, were all affected. Some were physically attacked for their beliefs; others were mentally scarred; parents suffered the despair of searching for their missing children: all those who witnessed the event, whether by accident or through their work, had to learn to live with its memory. Yet although Poniatowska may appear to be "absent" from the book, it was not randomly compiled. Those chosen and omitted from the final version, and the order in which they appear were carefully selected. It is a reconstruction of the movement, a tapestry created by Poniatowska, using the voices of others as her thread, but above all it is Poniatowska's work.¹¹⁸ As Franco maintained, testimonies are often recounted by the subaltern class to a member of the intelligentsia, which raises questions regarding the relationship between the editor and the cause addressed: "Is it that of a bystander? An impartial observer? Is she creating on the basis of somebody else's raw material? Or is it possible by means of double-voicing to bridge the gulf between the intelligentsia and the popular classes?"¹¹⁹

It can be argued that Poniatowska was simply portraying reality as she saw it. She stated, "no creo en los ismos, creo en la gente."¹²⁰ For her the importance was what

was reported not the genre in which it was depicted. She explained that format was not a priority when compiling *La noche de Tlatelolco*: “Yo escribí Tlatelolco indignada por lo que se le había hecho a la gente joven. [...] Escribía bajo la emoción.”¹²¹ Poniatowska attempted to come to terms the massacre by writing down the testimonies she was given: “Nunca pretendo nada más que fijar mi propia emoción. Jámás sé cuando hago o no literatura.”¹²² Following the 1985 earthquakes, Poniatowska cancelled her literature classes: “A las estudiantes les dije que no íbamos a tomar clases de literatura y hablando del *nouveau roman* o de no sé qué, cuando estaba nuestro país pasando tanto dolor.”¹²³ For Poniatowska, academic debate would always have a low priority at times of national suffering.

Poniatowska’s emotional attachment to *La noche de Tlatelolco* did not make her immune to criticism. When the book was in its final draft, it was pointed out that she had not included the testimony of Sócrates Amado Campos Lemus, the man accused of having betrayed the movement. She then interviewed him in Lecumberri and included his remarks in which he exonerated himself from any blame. Poniatowska recalled, “fui agresiva con él. Sócrates, por su parte, me respondió como una gente que trata de zafarse de los obstáculos.”¹²⁴ Although Poniatowska appeared to condemn Campos Lemus, she did not allow her distrust to intrude. Campos Lemus’s words simply lie alongside those of other witnesses; after them Poniatowska added the comments of two CNH members who emphasised that it was difficult to judge someone who has been tortured.¹²⁵

As a result, perhaps, of her frank comments about her emotional involvement, *La noche de Tlatelolco* was criticised for being over-sentimental in tone. Héctor

Manjarrez affirmed this view, but also admitted that he was moved and shocked by the book.¹²⁶ Monsiváis converted the charge into praise:

Las acusaciones de 'sentimentalismo' no evitaron la conversión del libro en un clásico: a lo largo de *La noche de Tlatelolco*, la ira, el dolor, el entusiasmo, la impotencia, actúan lípidamente a falta de un lenguaje político entonces ignorado o sólo memorizado dogmáticamente por unos cuantos.¹²⁷

The book's strength, Monsiváis argued, was Poniatowska's denouncement of the government that ensured the massacre would neither be forgotten nor repeated. Paz, too, offered praise: "Es algo mejor que una teoría o una hipótesis: un extraordinario reportaje. [...] Es un testimonio apasionado pero no partidista. [...] La pasión que corre por sus páginas es pasión por la justicia."¹²⁸ Paz emphasised that Poniatowska gave a voice to those who had been denied one. Her personalised history of the events at Tlatelolco should stand alongside other accounts to provide a more complete picture.

Cristina Pacheco asked Poniatowska what conclusions she had reached after writing the book. Poniatowska indicated that she both understood and condemned the government:

Pienso que el gobierno se aterró de cómo estaba creciendo el movimiento, sobre todo porque estaban por inaugurarse las Olimpiadas. [...] Díaz Ordaz no quiso que el movimiento echara a perder todo aquello. Por eso tanto él como su gabinete - que es igualmente responsable de lo que pasó - dieron órdenes de reprimir por la fuerza a los muchachos. El gobierno tenía miedo, en serio, y todo era una confusión tremenda.¹²⁹

Poniatowska clearly held Díaz Ordaz and his cabinet members to blame for the massacre; hence, as Secretary for Internal Affairs, Echeverría was also culpable. Made on the tenth anniversary of the massacre, at a time when it was still fashionable to single

out ex-president Díaz Ordaz to shoulder all the responsibility, Poniatowska's comments had additional weight.

While preparing her book, Poniatowska continued to publish interviews with those involved in the student movement. She met Bishop Méndez Arceo at Lecumberri Prison; Poniatowska asked him if he had prayed for the victims of Tlatelolco on the anniversary of their death. Méndez Arceo confirmed he had. Poniatowska then rebuked the authorities of the church bordering the Plaza de las Tres Culturas:

Pues ha hecho usted más allá [...] que los curas de la iglesia de Santiago Tlatelolco cuando la gente en plena balacera gritaba que por favor les abrieran: "Abranos, somos mexicanos" atrancaron totalmente las puertas... Ahora también, el 2 de octubre, dijeron que no tenían ni una media hora disponible, ya no digamos para una misa, sino para un responso...¹³⁰

The clergy denied the victims of Tlatelolco three times: on the night of the massacre they refused to open the church doors and shelter the students from the bullets; they declined to pray for the casualties; they refused to explain their inactivity. Poniatowska strongly berated this lack of compassion.

Just as *Días de guardar* affected the way Monsiváis was perceived by the public, so Poniatowska pointed to *La noche de Tlatelolco* as the turning point in her development as a writer. Since its publication she has devoted more time to the marginalised, powerless sectors of society.¹³¹ She explained, "siempre me han atraído los hombres que te descubren una verdad del mundo, por eso mi acercamiento a dirigentes obreros o a líderes intelectuales, mi estar siempre pendiente de alguien que te va a revelar una verdad que cambiará tu vida o tu modo de ser".¹³² Poniatowska has strong convictions, but is prepared to learn from others.

Monsiváis stressed that *La noche de Tlatelolco* transformed Mexican thought: "The young generation learned about Tlatelolco by reading Poniatowska. It was a book that changed the perception of the student movement."¹³³ It broke, "el cerco de silencios y difamación que el régimen de Díaz Ordaz impuso sobre el movimiento estudiantil".¹³⁴ Monsiváis recalled the period following the massacre and before the publication of *La noche de Tlatelolco* as one of fear and impotence: there was no means of criticising a brutal government.¹³⁵ For Monsiváis, the book instantly filled this vacuum. Within eighteen months of its release, it had reached seventeen editions.¹³⁶ In 1991, it was in its fiftieth edition and 250,000 copies had been sold.¹³⁷ On the insistence of Paz, an English version was prepared for which he wrote an introduction.¹³⁸ It was also translated into Polish and Czech.¹³⁹ Such success endowed Poniatowska with unsolicited attributes. Poniatowska recalled giving a paper in Toluca soon after its publication:

Lo que ellos esperaban era una especie de líder que los levantara en armas y estaban asombrados de ver llegar a una señora que a duras penas sabía donde estaba el pódium... No sé, había una especie de desfase entre mi persona y la imagen que se habían formado de mí través del libro. [...Esperaban] una guerrillera pero yo soy una periodista.¹⁴⁰

Poniatowska illustrated the difficulty facing writers who address political issues: confronting the government's version of the Student Movement had given her a reputation as an extremist rebel. Yet Poniatowska was responsible for her work. By stepping into the political arena at such a time, Poniatowska should expect to be cast in a dissident mould.

Poniatowska's relationship with those imprisoned for taking part in the student

protests lasted beyond their prison sentences. In January 1979, Poniatowska attended the funeral of Armando Castillejos, a lawyer who had helped the students in 1968 and subsequently defended workers' causes. Evidently Poniatowska knew him and his family well: she wrote as if talking directly to Castillejos, using the affectionate "tú". Her admiration for Castillejos was apparent as Poniatowska described him as a pioneer: the first Mexican lawyer to dedicate himself to the workers and the poor.¹⁴¹ In a similar vein, over the following decades Poniatowska would remain in contact with the students she had met in 1968. Her interest in them did not end with the publication of *La noche de Tlatelolco*.

Octavio Paz: A dissenting diplomat

El 2 de octubre de 1968 terminó el movimiento estudiantil. También terminó una época de la historia de México. Octavio Paz, 1969.¹⁴²

Although in India during the summer of 1968, Paz was acutely aware of the political situation at home. Besides information received from Mexico, Paz had access to reports in the European press to which Poniatowska drew attention.¹⁴³ On 6 September Paz voiced his concerns to Secretary of External Affairs, Antonio Carrillo Flores: "No se trata de una revolución social ... sino de realizar una reforma en nuestro sistema político. Si no comienza ahora, la próxima década de México será violenta."¹⁴⁴ Paz was evidently in the students' thoughts, too: demonstrators carried placards quoting his poetry: "Has muerto, camarada, en el ardiente amanecer del mundo."¹⁴⁵ Their choice of excerpt proved to be tragically prophetic; written at the height of the Spanish Civil War, the last line of this poem is, "Has muerto entre tuyos, por los tuyos."¹⁴⁶

As tensions rose, Paz wrote a lengthy reply to a Federal circular that asked diplomats to report on similar social protests elsewhere and to state the measures taken to control them. He recalled,

I tried to explain what I thought were the reasons for the student unrest. [...] The problems stemmed from [...] lack of communication. I did not agree with all of their demands, but I argued that peaceful means should be used. I then received a wire from the foreign secretary, congratulating me on my letter and saying that the president was reading it with great interest. After that, the army abandoned the National University and I was temporarily happy to think that perhaps they were following the policy I had recommended. Of course, a few days later they reversed themselves and the massacre occurred.¹⁴⁷

The Mexican government sought the views of its representatives, as an intellectual, Paz offered an informed analysis and expected to be heeded. He was trying to exert influence upon presidential policy from within the system. The events of 2 October proved this strategy was impossible; Paz promptly resigned: "No puedo aceptar esto... Sería difícil representar a un gobierno así."¹⁴⁸ Although far from Mexico, Paz had a clear idea of what happened at Tlatelolco: "No creo que las imágenes puedan mentir... He visto noticieros, fotografías..."¹⁴⁹ Paz expressed disappointment at the nature of domestic politics:

Pensaba [...] que el sistema actual iba a modificarse y que el progreso de la Revolución Mexicana podría seguir [...] que el país era capaz de hacer su autocrítica. [...] Que el PRI pudiera renovarse, esa esperanza se volvió absurda después de los acontecimientos del 2 de octubre. Entonces, la única solución es separarse del gobierno y criticarlo desde fuera.

In 1962 Paz had faith in the Mexican government and believed he could achieve democratic objectives by working within it as an ambassador. When it became evident that the PRI had rejected its professed revolutionary ideals, Paz resigned in favour of

achieving the same ends by operating outside the political system. He stated that the killing at Tlatelolco proved economic development had been at the expense of democracy.¹⁵⁰ Paz described the violence at Tlatelolco as “pura y llanamente un acto de terrorismo por parte del Estado”.¹⁵¹

The impact of Paz's departure was widely felt. *The Times Literary Supplement* stated it was “a reminder that writers are the last people that the government should expect to stick to diplomatic traditions of suppressing private moral disagreements for the sake of national solidarity”. It added that Paz had withdrawn from the Cultural Olympics planned by the Mexican government and instead had sent a poem, “México: Olimpiada de 1968”, to the Olympic Committee inviting them to distribute it. An English translation was included with the explanation that it would neither “be welcome in Mexico, nor conveyed to anybody beyond the Coordinating Committee”.¹⁵² The strength of *La Cultura en México* had been underestimated, however. The 30 October edition led with Paz's elegy, along with a copy of his letter to the Committee.¹⁵³ Dated 3 October 1968, it voiced Paz's anger and disgust. Writing the poem was a brave, anti-government stance; publishing it in Mexico was a yet more courageous move. *Excélsior* mentioned “México: Olimpiada de 1968” when commenting on Paz's resignation, but did not quote it.¹⁵⁴

Paz was greatly supported in Mexico. Froylán López Narváez described him as “valiosa”, adding that Paz's stance heralded the beginning of a change of attitude: “Ahora los mexicanos tendrán que ocuparse de la vida política de su patria, con lucidez y cuidado permanentes.”¹⁵⁵ Nikito Nipongo emphasised Paz's honourable conduct; and continued, “él, a enorme distancia de la Plaza de las Tres Culturas reacciona con más

gallardía que sus jefes".¹⁵⁶ The editorial committee of *La Cultura en México* paid tribute to Paz's work as ambassador and acknowledged the personal sacrifice of his resignation: "Paz siempre representó al país de un modo insuperable. Después de renunciar no sólo a su brillante carrera y a su cargo de embajador sino a su seguridad futura."¹⁵⁷

Others questioned Paz's motives: Enrique Orozco Aranda, of the University of Monterrey, presented Paz as an opportunist who sought a more lucrative academic post abroad. Apparently unaware of the government circular seeking comments from its overseas ministers, and oblivious of the reports in the international press, Orozco Aranda claimed Paz had received his information about the Student Movement from US intelligence agencies. He ended with a wider accusation and a thinly veiled threat to *Siempre!*:

Al defender la causa estudiantil, en realidad no defienden ningún principio, sino el pan nuestro de cada día y la posición que ocupan a través de intereses creados y de política acomodaticia. No digo nombres. Usted los conoce porque trabajan a su lado.¹⁵⁸

Orozco Aranda was referring to *La Cultura en México* coordinators, Monsiváis, Fernando Benítez, José Emilio Pacheco and Vicente Rojo. As shown in their decision to publish Paz's "México: Olimpiada de 1968", the team refused to be intimidated.

Roberto Blanco Moheno wrote of Paz's resignation: "Va a tratar de hacerse un héroe de Octavio Paz. [...] Me pregunto si hubiera renunciado de haber sido embajador de México en Francia. Se muere por Paris."¹⁵⁹ Blanco Moheno stated that India was neither an attractive nor a fashionable posting; it would be no hardship for Paz to leave. Yet Paz's time in India played an important part in his literary development.¹⁶⁰ He

recalled that he had some freedom in which to write and travel; it was a painful decision to leave.¹⁶¹

Perhaps those in a position best to judge the significance of Paz's resignation were those directly involved in the Student Movement. Paz's stance was all the more appreciated because he was the only government representative openly to support the students. Luis González de Alba described Rector Barros Sierra's resignation as a patriotic act, "sólo comparable al de Octavio Paz". Raúl Alvarez Garín stated those who remained silent were accomplices: "La masacre [...] fue 'justificada' por todos los sectores gubernamentales. [...] No se oyó ni una voz oficial de protesta por el asesinato de estudiantes salvo, fuera del país, la renuncia de Octavio Paz".¹⁶² In October 1969, José Revueltas revealed how Paz inspired his fellow inmates in Lecumberri Prison, including Martín Dozal Jottar who was then on hunger-strike:

Aquí en la cárcel todos reflexionamos a Octavio Paz, todos estos jóvenes de México te piensan, Octavio, y repiten los mismos sueños de tu vigilia. [...] Martín Dozal lee a Octavio Paz en prisión. Hay que darse cuenta de todo lo que esto significa, cuán grande cosa es, qué profunda esperanza tiene este hecho sencillo. Hubo pues de venir este tiempo, estos libros, esta enseñanza que nos despierta.¹⁶³

Revueltas's words are irrefutable: far from speculating, he directly experienced Paz's strong, vital, morale-boosting presence. Through the power of his words Paz brought a sense of freedom and comfort to the political prisoners.

It was not only those directly involved in the Student Movement who singled out Paz for praise. In 1970, a group of youths nominated Paz as their "padrino de generación".¹⁶⁴ He was chosen for his critical spirit, ideas and moral conduct. In Paz's

acceptance he endorsed the spirit of youth:

No los conozco pero adivino sus caras y la luz que las enciende: cólera, y alegría, entusiasmo, y esperanza. No los conozco y, no obstante, **los he visto**: aquí y en París, Nueva York, Delhi, Praga, Berlín. La juventud tiene ahora el mismo rostro en todas partes. Rostro de la indignación pero asimismo rostro de la fraternidad.¹⁶⁵

Paz's *Posdata* (1970), an epilogue to *El laberinto de la soledad*, re-examined Mexican society in the light of the Tlatelolco massacre, and presented a disparaging study of the nature and structure of its politics. He placed the student protests in a global context, noting that both the French and Mexican authorities accused the students of being influenced by the CIA. Although part of a world-wide phenomenon, Paz stressed that the students also acted spontaneously; each country had specific objectives to address.¹⁶⁶ Paz revealed that he was well informed about the Mexican Student Movement and that he generally approved of its aims.¹⁶⁷ Depicting the students as "reformista y democrático", he described how they became "los voceros del pueblo"; a "conciencia general". Paz underlined that revolution was far from the students' thoughts: "Nadie quiere una revolución sino una reforma: acabar con el régimen de excepción iniciado por el Partido Nacional Revolucionario hace cuarenta años. Las peticiones de los estudiantes, por lo demás, fueron realmente moderadas." The students called for dialogue with the government: Paz declared that if the politicians had followed that route, "se habría roto así la cárcel de palabras y conceptos en que el gobierno se ha encerrado". Instead, those in power pursued the path of violence, and thus exposed its "debilidad mental y moral".¹⁶⁸

Emphasising the fact that the carnage took place at the site of a pre-Columbian temple, Paz evoked the Aztecs' mass sacrifices: "La matanza de Tlatelolco nos revela

que un pasado que creíamos enterrado está vivo e irrumpe entre nosotros.”¹⁶⁹ Paz recalled the long history of centralised, authoritarian power that had made Mexicans subservient. Yet he stressed the past could be overcome: “In Mexico the past is something that we cannot abandon but to which we cannot return either. In Mexico there is tension between an alien past and a no less alien present. [...] I do not believe in the omnipotence of history.”¹⁷⁰ Paz proposed a critical revision of the past to shape a better future.

Paz searched for constitutional rights in the Mexican political system, and found, “el partido mexicano no conoce la democracia interna y está dominado por un grupo de jerarcas que, a su vez, prestan obediencia ciega al presidente en turno”. He added,

el PRI jamás ha sido un órgano de crítica de la acción presidencial; al contrario, lo ha sido de apoyo incondicional a sus medidas y de diligente ejecución de sus órdenes. En México hay un horror [...] a todo lo que sea crítica y disidencia intelectual; una diferencia de opinión se transforma instantánea e insensiblemente en una querrela personal. Esto es particularmente cierto por lo que toca al presidente: cualquier crítica a su política se convierte en sacrilegio.¹⁷¹

Clearly Paz had a different perspective from that of 1962 when he had accepted the ambassadorship. He claimed that Mexico’s single-party system had led to a situation in which any form of political disagreement was rejected as insurgency. There was no longer any possibility of reforming the system by working within it. This strong condemnation of the Mexican power structure and those who sustained it was written while Paz was in self-imposed exile. *Posdata* was published and distributed in Mexico in 1970; it was denounced by Díaz Ordaz.¹⁷²

In *Posdata*, Paz not only censured the presidency, he also stated that the entire

Mexican political system was corrupt. He depicted the Senate and Cámara de Diputados as, "dos cuerpos parlanchines y aduladores que jamás han ejercitado crítica alguna", and condemned the judiciary as, "mudo e impotente". This, he stressed, together with a lack of freedom of the press, gave the president almost unlimited power. Paz acknowledged that the PRI had brought benefits, but believed it had outlived its usefulness. He predicted two possible solutions: "democratización o dictadura". Paz maintained uneven development had led to,

la existencia de dos Méxicos, uno moderno y otro subdesarrollado. [...] El dilema se presenta así: o el México desarrollado absorbe e integra al otro o el México subdesarrollado, por el mero peso muerto del crecimiento demográfico, terminará por estrangular al México desarrollado.¹⁷³

Paz called for social justice to diminish the distance between the two Mexicos. He did not merely identify the problems in Mexican society, but proffered solutions. From his new position as an intellectual outside the political system, Paz proposed democratic changes.

Like *La noche de Tlatelolco*, *Posdata* was a best-seller in Mexico: by 1993 it had reached twenty editions, and has been translated into English, French, and German.¹⁷⁴ Yet the book was criticised by both sides of the political spectrum. The Right denounced it as "an anti-Mexican tract", whereas, "the radical Left and the liberals were scandalized by Paz's psychological and anthropological analysis of the deep-lying myths of the Mexican conscience."¹⁷⁵ Ironically, Paz was hindered by being the one government official who resigned in support of the students. Such action increased popular expectations; his analysis was seen as insensitive and inappropriate. Paz's "crime" was to have made an academic investigation and to apply his findings to a recent and raw Mexican wound. He portrayed the Mexican identity in terms of its

different levels of consciousness: “Lo que ocurrió el 2 de octubre de 1968 fue, simultáneamente, la negación de aquello que hemos querido ser desde la Revolución y la afirmación de aquello que somos desde la Conquista y aún antes.”¹⁷⁶ Tlatelolco confirmed a common Mexican characteristic that had been present since pre-Columbian times. Hence, Paz stated, the events at Tlatelolco were predestined. Paz was against the PRI, but his analysis seemed to nullify the force of popular protest. At the same time Paz tied the State’s repressive action to a history of sacrifices, making it appear less to blame for the bloodshed. Paz perceived what happened at Tlatelolco in terms of his own highly educated, multi-cultural background. He could, perhaps, have foreseen that a theoretical analysis might be deemed to be inappropriate by the victims of the government repression. Fuentes described *Posdata* as “an uncomfortable book” of which “few literate Mexicans have actually approved”. It made Mexicans uneasy, Fuentes continued, because Paz challenged Mexico “to take a good look at [...] its cultural and mythical past”. Fuentes underlined that critics of the Left misconstrued Paz’s objectives: “They were demanding that he cease to be what he is, a writer, and become what he was not and did not want to be: an avenging demagogue, an active political leader.”¹⁷⁷ Yet, as Poniatowska discovered after the publication of *La noche de Tlatelolco*, authors are responsible for their texts. The notion that one can address political issues and not face the consequences is a little naive. Writers have to face their readers’ interpretations and expectations and, in this case, the victims’ sensitivities.

Antonio Deltoro was among those who expressed concern that Paz diminished the government’s responsibility for the massacre. Writing in 1978 he stated, “para Paz, Díaz Ordaz no fue el causante de la matanza de Tlatelolco, o si quiere, lo fue sólo como la encarnación del verdadero responsable: Hutzilopochtli (sic.)”. Deltoro accused Paz of

obscuring the true causes of the massacre, concluding that *Posdata* was an imaginative book, but provided little understanding of Mexico's present problems.¹⁷⁸ By concentrating only upon Paz's book, Deltoro overlooked the fact that Paz had called for an investigation: "¿Por qué la matanza? Desde octubre de 1968 los mexicanos se hacen esta pregunta. Hasta que no sea contesta el país no recobrará la confianza en sus gobernantes y en sus instituciones."¹⁷⁹ Indeed, by taking a historical perspective, Paz gave the Student Movement wider significance. What happened on 2 October 1968, Paz explained,

evoca (repite) el rito azteca: varios cientos de muchachos y muchachas inmolados, sobre las ruinas de una pirámide, por el Ejército y la Policía. La literalidad del rito - la realidad del sacrificio - subrayan atrozmente el carácter irreal y expiatorio de la represión: el régimen mexicano castigó en los jóvenes a su propio pasado revolucionario.¹⁸⁰

Rather than exonerate those responsible for the massacre, Paz directly accused the Army and police: the government had rejected its revolutionary past and thus the basis of its present legitimacy. In 1993, Julio Scherer questioned Paz about his association of the Tlatelolco massacre with the pre-Columbian sacrifices. Paz's analysis had not substantially changed:

Fue una intención arriesgada pero no insensata ni carente de fundamento. Hay una continuidad en la historia de México. [...] Si nuestra imagen de la autoridad tiene raíces precolombinas y virreinales, también tiene la del castigo y la opresión. Hay que saber leer lo que está escrito atrás de los acontecimientos.¹⁸¹

Enrique Krauze claimed, "1968 saved Paz from political scepticism. Paz resigned as ambassador, wrote *Posdata* and found freedom".¹⁸² However, the adverse responses to *Posdata* confined Paz; his relationship with those of the Mexican Left was

particularly marred. In 1993 Paz depicted the reaction to *Posdata*: “Escandalizados por las ideas y pareceres que exponía en *Posdata*, decretaron mi muerte civil. La condena dura ya veinticinco años; en la mayoría de las recientes conmemoraciones de 1968 [...] no se mencionaron ni mi nombre ni mis escritos.”¹⁸³ Paz was clearly still hurt by the opposition to his work. He had followed his conscience in 1968, resigning his ambassadorship, and proffered his interpretation of the episode. But, just as the Mexican government rejected his proposals for a peaceful solution to the conflict in September 1968, Paz believed that his analysis of the massacre had been discarded.

Yet Paz’s definition of the Student Movement was not static. In September 1968, Paz stated that he “did not agree with all of the students’ demands” but that “peaceful means should be used” to solve the situation.¹⁸⁴ Eighteen months later he maintained:

Los estudiantes se levantan y dicen con razón: “Si somos capaces de organizar las Olimpiadas, también somos capaces de opinar y de hablar.” Si México es ya un país semimoderno también debe ser un país democrático o, por lo menos semidemocrático. Lo que pedían los estudiantes era **democracia**.¹⁸⁵

Although not contradicting his earlier interpretation, in depicting a coordinated student uprising in the name of democracy, Paz appeared to have imposed some of his own aspirations on the Student Movement.

In a similar way, Paz’s attitude in 1968 has been distorted according to the hopes of others. In 1972 José Emilio Pacheco explained, “las actitudes *morales* que asumieron algunos escritores durante 1968, particularmente la renuncia de Octavio Paz [...] despertaron expectativas *políticas* que no figuraban en su proyecto y que, al cumplirse

de manera distinta a la que esperaban sus lectores".¹⁸⁶ Paz's resignation was genuine and based upon moral considerations, but it bestowed unsolicited and inappropriate additional status upon him. This perhaps explains the adverse reaction to *Posdata* by the Left: some were disappointed in Paz's apparent change of stance. Yet, as Paz maintained, "yo no soy un político militante".¹⁸⁷ Paz was not, nor ever pretended to be an icon of the Left: in 1968 he had simply followed his conscience.

Carlos Fuentes: Caesar's critic

Los acontecimientos de 1968 descubrieron lo peor y lo mejor de México. [...] De un lado, la mediocridad y la vesania de un presidente y su corte de diputados, ministros, generales y regentes. Del otro un rector y un estudiantado. Carlos Fuentes, 1971.¹⁸⁸

Fuentes was in Paris during the summer of 1968 but, like Paz, kept in close touch with events in Mexico. He discussed the events of the last two years of Díaz Ordaz's presidency in *Diana o la cazadora solitaria*: Tlatelolco; Paz's resignation; Martín Luis Guzmán's praise of Díaz Ordaz; the imprisonment of José Revueltas. Fuentes's narrator ("Carlos", who was in Paris) circulated petitions condemning the violence and calling for Revueltas's release. He stated that the Mexican students sought democracy, freedom and justice, but found violence. "Carlos" depicted the frustration of being unable to respond:

Yo esperaba que los nuevos escritores tradujeran todo esto a literatura, pero no me eximía a mí mismo de una mirada dura, acusándome a mí mismo complicidades y ceguras que me impidieron participar mejor, más directamente, en ese parteaguas de la vida moderna de México que fue el 68.¹⁸⁹

Diana is a novel; moreover it was written in 1995, but it is probable that Fuentes was expressing his own feelings.¹⁹⁰ Furthermore Fuentes was aware that many Mexicans

regarded him as an outsider; he had “characteristically” witnessed the Prague and Paris springs of 1968, but was not at Tlatelolco.¹⁹¹ In *Diana*, Fuentes looked back to 1968 and regretted that he had not played a more active role in the aftermath of the massacre: “Elena Poniatowska y Luis González de Alba escribieron los grandes libros sobre la tragedia de Tlatelolco, y yo debí contentarme con admirarlos y sentir que hablaban, también, en mi nombre.”¹⁹² Fuentes stressed the collective responsibility of writers: Poniatowska and González de Alba not only articulated their own and their informants’ views, but spoke for everyone who sympathised with the students’ plight. Fuentes placed the importance firmly upon what was said rather than individual authorship. Nonetheless, rather than directly confronting the issue, he seemed to be more comfortable addressing it from behind a screen of fiction.

His regrets notwithstanding, Fuentes had been quick to condemn the violence of 2 October 1968. He organised a protest letter, published in *Le Monde*, in which Fuentes appealed to “hombres de conciencia” to boycott the Mexican cultural festival to which Paz submitted “México: Olimpiada de 1968”.¹⁹³ This action was strongly denounced in *Novedades*. In an editorial, “Cronos” asked what Fuentes’s father would have thought of his son’s political ideas and called upon the French ambassador to oppose Fuentes.¹⁹⁴ In an open letter of reply sent to *La Cultura en México*, Fuentes berated the Mexican government and the political system, emphasising the obstructions placed to impede any form of criticism. He explained that the remarks made against him were, “las formas típicas de fascismo” of the current climate. He was particularly incensed by the pseudonym: “Cronos” did not have the courage to use his real name. Fuentes proudly stated that his opposition to the government dated back to 1959 when repression had been used against the railway workers. Since then, Fuentes claimed, Mexico had been

in crisis; a situation that had reached a cross-roads: "Hoy, esa crisis ha llegado a su disyuntiva final: la reforma de la revolución o la dictadura militar." Fuentes described the Student Movement as "el magnífico movimiento de una juventud".¹⁹⁵ The Mexican regime, Fuentes stressed, had a choice: to listen to the demands of the young, or to use repression.

Fuentes continued that opposition to government policy was not tantamount to betraying one's country. He referred to the President as "el delegado transitorio y revocable del verdadero México". The "real" Mexico, Fuentes argued, was found within its people, "todos los mexicanos, pero sobre todo los que combatimos, adentro o afuera, con los brazos o con la pluma, por una sociedad mejor, más democrática y libre". Fuentes clearly considered himself to be among the writers who were fighting for a better Mexico, and furiously denied Cronos's charge that his work "denigra a México". He suggested other, more worthy, culprits: "Los tanques en la Universidad, la masacre de Tlatelolco, los estudiantes presos y torturados, los diputados serviles, [...] y los periodistas [...] como 'Cronos'." Fuentes forcefully condemned the violence used against the students, and denounced the journalists who accepted the government's interpretation of the Student Movement. He singled out Paz for praise, depicting him as a "verdadero intelectual".¹⁹⁶ For Fuentes, speaking out against the government and dissociating himself from it, meant that Paz had fulfilled the intellectual's function as a "redeemer of his society".¹⁹⁷ In the current climate, Fuentes emphasised, "criticar es exaltar. Y celebrar es denigrar."¹⁹⁸

In 1972, Fuentes recalled other accusations made against him: "Murmuraban:

'usted, Carlos Fuentes, es muy valiente para decir eso desde París, ¡vengase a México!''¹⁹⁹ Fuentes responded by returning to Mexico in March 1969 while Díaz Ordaz was still in office. On arrival, Fuentes reiterated that anti-government sentiments did not manifest an anti-patriotic attitude: "Quiero dejar bien clara, [...] que criticar al César no es criticar a Roma; [...] que hacer críticas al gobierno no equivale a criticar a la nación. [...] El Gobierno de México no es la encarnación de la nación, sino un representante pasajero."²⁰⁰ Fuentes underlined the distinction between the country and its rulers, stressing that power was a temporary status: the domination of the president would abruptly end with his six year term of office. These strong words were spoken when many of those who had taken part in the Student Movement were living in hiding. Fuentes was not afraid to return to the country and voice his views.²⁰¹

Fuentes recognised an important role for himself. Expanding the metaphor used by Porfirio Díaz at the outbreak of the Mexican Revolution,²⁰² he explained, "en México hay un tigre domesticado, pero ese tigre está bien vivo. [...] Se le han dado demasiado inyecciones de pentotal, pero el tigre aún está vivo, no muere." Fuentes recommended weaning the tiger away from pentotal, (defined as "la retórica oficial") with writers providing an alternative nourishment: "La literatura es fundamentalmente un arma crítica y un arma constitutiva." He stated that economic, social and political development programmes were long overdue. Although Fuentes did not supply details of how government policy should be changed, he indicated that he and his peers should shape its direction: "Siente uno que la responsabilidad de la clase intelectual mexicana se acrecienta. Hay muchas cosas que defender, muchas cosas que desarrollar, pero que se haga con independencia, [y] con un sentido crítico." Fuentes saw himself as an intellectual who could ensure that the ideals of the Revolution were fulfilled. He

claimed Mexicans were beginning to take the initiative; the political tide was turning.²⁰³ Like Monsiváis, Fuentes judged 1968 to mark the birth of Mexican civil society. In August 1971, Fuentes stressed the urgent need to expropriate "la sociedad civil" from government control; this would be possible through unions, cooperatives, the media, universities and schools.²⁰⁴ He deliberately chose to use and to apply the work of Gramsci, then in vogue in Europe, to highlight the Mexican case. Fuentes had returned to Mexico believing democratic change to be possible. As a writer and intellectual he deemed he had a social and political duty to shape the course of this transformation and would work to ensure that the majority had a voice in State affairs.

In August 1969, Fuentes clarified his perceived role. He defined Mexican politics as, "un sistema político petrificado, gerontocrático, incapaz de evolución". This had estranged the country's youth:

Les dice a los jóvenes que la revolución fue en balde, que ellos los jóvenes, que son fruto de las reformas económicas, culturales y educativas, no tienen, sin embargo, derecho a ser libres, a expresarse fuera del sistema, a cuestionar los vicios de las instituciones, a ejercer la prueba de la democracia.²⁰⁵

Under the present political system, Fuentes argued, there was no choice but to submit to those in power. Fuentes then examined his own duty: "[nosotros] ciudadanos-escritores debemos preguntarnos cuál será el destino de las palabras en una sociedad como la nuestra". Although Fuentes clearly included himself here, he used others to present his case:

La conciencia, la sustancia vital de los jóvenes es formada por la lectura de un poema de Paz o de un ensayo de Monsiváis o de un libro de Benítez, [...] por el arte de Cuevas. En un país sin información oportuna o verdadera, la cultura llena el vacío. Una línea de Octavio Paz dice más que todos los

ramplones discursos del PRI.²⁰⁶

He paid tribute to Paz and those at *La Cultura en México* for their work in influencing Mexican youth and making the public aware of national affairs. Fuentes evidently saw intellectuals as key players in the battle to achieve democratic change, and intended to take a leading part in this struggle.

Seven months later Fuentes was included among those he had nominated for praise in the above article. In a full page spread, cartoonist Alberto Beltrán placed “cinco opresores” (Paz, Monsiváis, Benítez, José Luis Cuevas, and Fuentes) at the top of what he called “la nueva pirámide” of power. The tallest of the figures, Fuentes, stated, “somos aristócratas intelectuales”; Benítez added, “somos genios”.²⁰⁷ Although he found the drawing distasteful, Fuentes was not averse to be portrayed in such company and was happy to answer Beltrán’s charge: “¿Cómo hemos llegado a tan privilegiada posición? Sencilísimo: trabajando con independencia del erario público y manteniendo una actitud crítica y libre ante un poder.” Fuentes explained their stances: Paz resigned in protest against the Tlatelolco massacre; Benítez denounced the exploitation of Mexican indigenous people; unlike Beltrán, (Fuentes could not resist a jibe) Cuevas refused to repeat the official version of what happened at Tlatelolco; Fuentes described Monsiváis as an intellectual who, “como todos nosotros [...] vive de su obra”.²⁰⁸ Fuentes did not present a case for himself, preferring perhaps to let others judge his contribution.

As Beltrán revealed, shortly after his return to Mexico, Fuentes was perceived to be at the forefront of the resistance to Díaz Ordaz’s government; Paz was also given such status. This indicates how far-reaching their words were. In 1995, Fuentes

reflected that he had done very little in the aftermath of Tlatelolco; Paz's *Posdata* was not yet published at the time of Beltrán's cartoon. Monsiváis had been far more vocal in his support of the Student Movement; yet Fuentes and Paz were deemed to have been equally involved in promoting the dissidents' cause. Their international recognition, perhaps, gave Paz and Fuentes additional eminence. It is an indication of the macho climate in Mexico that neither Beltrán nor Fuentes mentioned Poniatowska. She might argue that such ignorance of her strength and ability gave her the freedom to write as she pleased. Conversely, as already discussed, Paz's resignation as ambassador endowed him with aspirations and attributes that he had never assumed, and did not merit. While this might be fortuitous in 1970, it would prove less advantageous in later years.

In common with the other writers of this study, Fuentes prepared a political book: *Tiempo mexicano*, an examination of Mexican life in the 1960s and an early assessment of Echeverría's presidency, was published in 1972. Critic Héctor Manjarrez described *Tiempo mexicano* as, "el libro más personal que ha escrito Fuentes y, sin duda alguna, el más abierto: abierto a la crítica, abierto a la simpatía (en todo el sentido de la palabra)".²⁰⁹ Published at a time when President Echeverría was paying lip-service towards a democratic opening, Fuentes depicted the 1968 conflict as good versus evil:

[Rector Barros Sierra] propició un clima de diálogo y libertad, de confianza y razón, de autocrítica y de relación responsable entre las autoridades universitarias y el estudiantado. Para Barros Sierra, la Universidad era el proyecto piloto de nuestro futuro: el microcosmos de una convivencia mexicana libre de cohecho, presión, violencia y mentira, un centro de debate razonado, de honestidad en todos los órdenes, de legalidad estricta, no sujeta a caprichos personales. [...] La violencia fue siempre obra del aparato represivo: la policía, los granaderos, el ejército.²¹⁰

Fuentes bestowed almost divine qualities upon the students, led by their 'Moses', Barros Sierra.²¹¹ Like Paz, Fuentes portrayed the Student Movement as a pure and sincere request for democratic, constitutional rights.²¹² Fuentes abhorred the movement's violent end, but welcomed the consequence: "El sistema se arruinó a sí mismo." The fragile base of political power was exposed revealing Mexico's apparent stability and progress to be based upon force. Crucially, the Movement awoke civic forces in Mexico; a power that was growing. Fuentes strongly condemned Díaz Ordaz as an incapable president who, "abocaba al país a una política de fuerza, represión y fascismo."²¹³ Díaz Ordaz may have been inept, but his presidency was over; Fuentes looked forward to a brighter, freer, more democratic future.

Some conclusions

Monsiváis maintained that although members of the AIAE had diverse ideologies, all agreed on the group's specific aims. In a similar way, while these four writers were all appalled by the government's violence, and its denial of what happened at Tlatelolco, their interpretations varied. Whether acting as intellectual critics of power (like Paz and Fuentes) or for reasons of personal involvement (as in the cases of Monsiváis and Poniatowska) they all voiced their disgust and consternation. Monsiváis's and Poniatowska's coverage of the Student Movement had a fundamental impact on their subsequent work. Monsiváis had been deeply involved with the students and worked throughout the summer to increase popular support, drawing attention to the increasingly brutal measures taken against them. Poniatowska's personal ties with some of the students were fortified in the months following the massacre as she visited them in prison and obtained their testimonies. In so doing, Monsiváis and Poniatowska can

be seen to have acted as the organic intellectuals of the Student Movement. Paz's resignation from his government post resonated far beyond Mexico, and ensured that the massacre could not be ignored. Fuentes witnessed student protests of a similar nature in Europe and encouraged French intellectuals to voice their condemnation of Díaz Ordaz. Thus the four writers gave a voice to the students and kept them in the public sphere at a time when the government would rather they languished in obscurity.

Their books addressing this episode reflected their personal involvement and private standpoints. Paz's *Posdata* took a global view of student discontent; he did not focus extensively on the Mexican Student Movement itself. Analysing the massacre, Paz adopted a historical perspective, proffering solutions for society as a whole. In *Tiempo mexicano*, Fuentes examined the Student Movement and anticipated a better future in which lessons would be learned from the past. Both *Tiempo mexicano* and *Posdata* are academic books; their authors drew upon current intellectual comment when presenting their theses. *Días de guardar* and *La noche de Tlatelolco* reflect their authors' close ties with the movement; concentrating exclusively on Mexico, recreating the experience of the summer of 1968. The shocking impact of the government violence is evident. Taken together, the different reactions of these four writers provide a greater understanding of "1968", and what it meant to a range of people.

Weijers's "testifying intellectual" is one who "speaks in defence of the common good", characterised by "his or her confrontation with a closed public opinion, the invulnerable cynicism of power and the political monopoly of knowledge".²¹⁴ While their responses were formed in individual ways, Paz, Fuentes, Poniatowska and Monsiváis would all be seen as intellectuals who had confronted the government and

defended the common good. Monsiváis and Poniatowska were involved at the grass roots level; they attended some of the demonstrations and shared the triumphs and frustrations of the students. Conversely, neither Paz nor Fuentes participated in the movement and lacked any direct experience of the students' thoughts and dreams. The repercussions of Paz's resignation and the impact of Fuentes's few, well-chosen words reveal the importance of well-established intellectuals to popular causes.

None of the four writers wielded any direct influence over Díaz Ordaz, seeming to confirm Paz's view that the president deemed any adverse political comment to be heresy.²¹⁵ As ambassador, Paz had tried to steer the government's response to popular discontent, but his words were ignored. Fuentes voiced his condemnation of the government at home and abroad before Díaz Ordaz left office. Monsiváis and Poniatowska gave publicity to the students before the massacre, writing to promote their cause. While their work may have had no bearing on presidential policy, it did increase support for the movement. And for Mexicans at the end of the 1960s, the imperative was that the deaths of those at Tlatelolco were not forgotten.

Although the four writers concurred in their condemnation of the Mexican government, small differences between them were already apparent. These disparities would widen and become grounds for disagreements in the years to come. The first test was their reactions to the new president, Luis Echeverría Alvarez.

Notes to chapter two

- ¹ Carlos Monsiváis, "No con un sollozo, sino entre disparos (Notas sobre cultura mexicana 1910-1968), *Revista Iberoamericana*, No.55, July-Dec. 1989, p.717.
- ² Brewster, Interview with Monsiváis, 1996.
- ³ Castañeda, *Utopia Unarmed*, pp.175-176. Orfila then founded the publishing house, Siglo XXI and distributed the translated work of French philosophers, among them Althusser, Foucault and Lévi-Strauss. In so doing, Castañeda claimed, "Orfila probably contributed more to the diffusion of elementary Marxism in Latin America than anyone else".
- ⁴ Carlos Monsiváis, "Intelectuales y artistas (algunos, muchos) en el 68", *La Jornada*, No.3256, 2 Oct. 1993, Suplemento, pp.3, 5. Monsiváis cited the work of Poniatowska, Luis González de Alba, Rosario Castellanos, Jaime Sabines, Paz, José Emilio Pacheco and José Carlos Becerra.
- ⁵ Bo Anderson and James Cockcroft, "Control and Cooptation in the Mexican System" in Richard R. Fagan and Wayne A. Cornelius (eds.), *Latin America: Seven Confrontations*, (New Jersey, 1970), p.308.
- ⁶ Rafael Segovia, "Mexican Politics and the University Crisis", in *ibid.*, p.313.
- ⁷ Monsiváis, "Intelectuales y artistas", p.3.
- ⁸ Ronald Fraser, *1968: A Student Generation in Revolt*, (London, 1988), p.1.
- ⁹ Radhakrishnan, "Toward an Effective Intellectual", p.71. Radhakrishnan mentioned the work of Sartre, Camus, Merleau-Ponty, and de Beauvoir "who had all been embroiled in the 'macro' discourses of French colonialism, international communism, and Stalinism".
- ¹⁰ Poniatowska, *La noche de Tlatelolco*, pp.18-19.
- ¹¹ Scherer García, Julio, "Salinas, modernización, TLC, democracia, el 68, el poder: En visperas de sus 80 años Octavio Paz hace relación y recuento de su pensamiento", *Proceso*, No.885, 18 Oct. 1993, p.8. As discussed below, this is not what Paz stated in *Posdata*. See, Octavio Paz, *Posdata*, (México D.F., 1970), pp.28-31.
- ¹² Fraser, *1968*, p.266; Tariq Ali, *Street Fighting Years*, (London, 1987), p.226. It is by no means certain that student movements elsewhere took heed of the situation in Mexico. In his global study, Fraser barely mentioned it, even though he claimed that the Tlatelolco massacre, "shook [...] student movements elsewhere". Ali overlooked the Mexican movement in his reconstruction of 1968. Indeed, he recalled the optimism shown at a demonstration just three weeks after the massacre. "We were [...] the advance guard of a new order. [...] The world had to be changed and France and Vietnam proved that it is possible to move forward." Apparently no thoughts were spared for their Mexican counterparts. Yet John Rodda's eye-witness reports in *The Guardian* would surely not have escaped Ali's attention. Rodda also made impassioned pleas for the Olympic Games to be cancelled. His articles, illustrated by photographs that would also appear in Poniatowska's *La noche de Tlatelolco*, made front-page headlines in *The Guardian*, see in particular, Nos.38019-21, 4-7 Oct. 1968.
- ¹³ Castañeda, *Utopia Unarmed*, pp.191-193. This situation was mirrored elsewhere: in 1967 there were 6 million students in the United States, 2.5 million in Western Europe and 1.5 million in Japan. France saw an increase in student numbers from 60,000 in the 1930s, to 600,000 in 1968. Capitalism could not integrate so many graduates; the buildings, accommodation and student facilities were unable to cope. Increases in education and unemployment led to the development of a changed political consciousness. Ali maintained that in any case France was ready to explode due to high unemployment, a wage freeze and the expansion of the working class. See Ali, *Street Fighting Years*, p.193; Tariq Ali, *1968 and After: Inside the Revolution*, (London, 1978), pp.xxxiii-xxxiv.
- ¹⁴ Philip, *The Presidency*, p.50.
- ¹⁵ Ali, *Street Fighting Years*, p.22. Ali was describing Pakistan under martial law, but such sentiments can be applied to Mexico in 1968.
- ¹⁶ Fraser, *1968*, pp.2-6.
- ¹⁷ Ali, *Street Fighting Years*, p.116.
- ¹⁸ Judith Adler Hellman, *Mexico in Crisis*, (New York, 1983), p.174.
- ¹⁹ Advertisement in *El Día*, quoted in Elena Poniatowska, *La noche de Tlatelolco*, (México D.F., 1971), pp.59-60. Articles 145 and 145b of the Penal Code had been set up as emergency measures during World War Two to sanction the imprisonment (of between two and twelve years) for anyone attending meetings of three or more people, at which plans were made to threaten public order.
- ²⁰ Ricardo Garibay, "La hora cero", *Excelsior*, No.18837, 27 Sept. 1968, p.7.
- ²¹ Luis Echeverría, 30 July 1968, quoted in Poniatowska, *La noche*, p.277.
- ²² Meyer and Sherman, *The Course of Mexican History*, p.665.

²³ Johnson, *Mexican Democracy*, p.4; Ali, *1968 and After*, p.12. Again a parallel can be drawn with the French students who wanted more funding for education and less on nuclear weapons.

²⁴ Philip, *The Presidency*, pp.50-51. Philip maintained that Díaz Ordaz believed in an international conspiracy and sent an emissary to Paris to investigate Franco-Mexican student links.

²⁵ Adler Hellman, *Mexico in Crisis*, p.177.

²⁶ Quoted in Poniatowska, *La noche*, p.278.

²⁷ Quoted in *ibid.*, p.60.

²⁸ See for example, [N.A.], "El Ejército saldrá de CU cuando la Universidad lo pida", *Excélsior*, No.18830, 20 Sept. 1968, pp.1, 27; Editorial, "Momento critical", *Excélsior*, No.18830, 20 Sept. 1968, p.6; Froylán M. López Narváez, "Política dudosa: Asalto de la razón", *Excélsior*, No.18830, 20 Sept. 1968, p.7.

²⁹ *Excélsior*, No.18829, 19 Sept. 1968, pp.1, 6, 7; Abel Quesada, "Toro de regalo", *Excélsior*, No.18830, 20 Sept. 1968, p.7. Quesada depicted a student sitting in a soldier's hand, the student says, "con la novedad de que ahora ya no son seis puntos: son siete".

³⁰ Quoted in Carlos Monsiváis, "Javier Barros Sierra/ 1968", *La Cultura en México*, No.551, 30 Aug. 1972, p.xi.

³¹ Abel Quesada, "Todo es posible en la paz", *Excélsior*, No.18840, 30 Sept. 1968, p.7. Quesada drew a woman wearing a sash with the name "universidad". Looking at her black eye in a mirror, she mused, "a ver si me quita para el día 12".

³² Poniatowska, *La noche*, pp.166-171; Fernando Benítez, "Los días de la ignominia", *La Cultura en México*, No.349, 23 Oct. 1968, p.ii.

³³ Elena Poniatowska, "Massacre in Mexico" in W.D. Raat and W.H. Beezley (eds.), *Twentieth-Century Mexico*, (Lincoln, 1986), p.257; Meyer and Sherman, *The Course of Mexican History*, p.670; Paz, *Posdata*, p.38; Poniatowska, *La noche*, p.170. Meyer and Sherman quote an independent report in the British newspaper, *The Guardian*, that recorded 325 deaths, a figure also used by Paz in *Posdata*; Poniatowska quoted Paz. None of them provided a precise reference. An examination of *The Guardian* from October 1968 to December 1969 (the date of *Posdata*'s publication) reveals no such report. On 4 October, John Rodda, who spoke no Spanish, quoted a Mexican journalist who claimed 500 people had been killed. The man "wrote the figure down in case we misunderstood". After returning from Mexico, Rodda stated, "an accurate figure of the deaths will never be known but the 500 I reported the following day is not likely to be far off the mark." See, John Rodda, "Trapped at Gun-point in Middle of Fighting", *The Guardian*, No.38019, 4 Oct. 1968, pp.1, 2; John Rodda, "After the Games are over", *The Guardian*, No.38043, 1 Nov. 1968, p.10.

Francisco Ortiz Pinchetti, "Políticamente, el movimiento triunfó", *Proceso*, No.100, 2 Oct. 1978, p.11. CNH member Marcelino Perelló claimed to have overheard a police officer say that over 500 people were killed.

³⁴ John Rodda, "Olympic Torch Arrives in Mexico", *The Guardian*, No.38021, 7 Oct. 1968, p.1.

³⁵ Poniatowska, *La noche*, pp.182, 183.

³⁶ Germán Valdez Martínez, Alberto López Islas y Lázaro Rodríguez Morales, "Testimonios sobre la acción militar del 2 de octubre", *Proceso*, No.25, 23 April 1977, p.7.

³⁷ Poniatowska, *La noche*, pp.114-116, 119, 120, 257-258. Many of Poniatowska's informants repeated this charge.

³⁸ Francisco Ortiz Pinchetti, "Políticamente, el movimiento triunfó", *Proceso*, No.100, 2 Oct. 1978, p.9.

³⁹ Víctor Avilés, "Entrevista con Sócrates Amado Campos Lemus", *Nexos*, No.121, Jan. 1988, pp.82-83; Carlos Marín, "Sócrates, 'delator' del movimiento: El embajador de EU propuso a García Barragán el cuartelazo", *Proceso*, No. 100, 2 Oct. 1978, pp.13-15; Poniatowska, *La noche*, pp. 120-121, 157.

Campos Lemus stated that the meeting was filmed without Freeman's knowledge and that García Barragán immediately contacted Díaz Ordaz guaranteeing the full support of the armed forces. Campos Lemus claimed that García Barragán showed him the film.

⁴⁰ Joaquín López Dóriga, "Octubre de 1968 visto, analizado y juzgado por Corona del Rosal", *Siempre!*, No.1200, 23 June 1976, pp.20, 22.

⁴¹ [N.A.], "Ninguno falleció: Hernández Toledo", *Proceso*, No.100, 2 Oct. 1978, p.23.

⁴² Gustavo Díaz Ordaz, quoted by Carlos Monsiváis, "En la misma ciudad ante distinta gente", *Proceso*, No.24, 16 April 1977, p.12.

⁴³ [N.A.], "Obituario: Marcelino García Barragán", *Proceso*, No.149, 10 Sept. 1979, p.22.

⁴⁴ Luis Pazos, *¿Porqué Chiapas?*, (México D.F., 1994).

⁴⁵ Abel Quesada, "¿Por qué?", *Excélsior*, No.18843, 3 Oct. 1968, p.7. On the day following the Tlatelolco massacre, Quesada submitted a rectangle filled with black ink with the accusing caption, "¿Por qué?". The "cartoon" was the same size as Quesada's others, and was printed in its usual position, but its

stark presence made it appear much larger.

⁴⁶ Miguel Reyes Razo, "Su poder a la familia", *Excelsior*, No.25247, 16 July 1986, pp.1, 15.

⁴⁷ Camp, *Intellectuals and the State*, p.209.

⁴⁸ Brewster, Interview with Monsiváis, 1996.

⁴⁹ Monsiváis, "Intelectuales y artistas", p.5. It is possible that Siqueiros was trying to exert influence from within the system. He had promoted the railway workers' strike in the 1950s and suffered six years in prison for his efforts. On 24 September 1968 Siqueiros was quoted as recommending that Díaz Ordaz, "vacie las cárceles de presos políticos y no las rellene". Siqueiros was also reputed to have asked Díaz Ordaz to speak to the students and resolve the dispute. He was said to have condemned the use of force against the students. That Siqueiros was not rewarded after his alleged support for Díaz Ordaz seems to substantiate this point.

⁵⁰ Williamson, *The Penguin History*, p.306; Martin, *Journeys*, p.44-45. Martin, however, stated that Guzmán had always shown, "little sympathy for the popular cause", citing the author's disdain for supporters of Emiliano Zapata.

⁵¹ [N.A.], [N.T.], *Excelsior*, No.18883, 12 Nov. 1968, p.16.

⁵² José Manuel Jurado, "Reafirma más amplio respeto por la libertad de prensa: Acata y acatará la decisión del pueblo", *Excelsior*, No. 19087, 8 June 1969, p.19.

⁵³ Carlos Monsiváis, "México: Notas sobre literatura y sociedad; A la hora exacta del colonialismo cultural", *La Cultura en México*, No.571, 17 Jan. 1973, p.xvi.

⁵⁴ Carlos Monsiváis, "Mira, para que no comas olvido...: Las precisiones de Elena Poniatowska", *La Cultura en México*, No.1007, 15 July 1981, p.ii.

⁵⁵ Brewster, Interview with Monsiváis, 1996.

⁵⁶ Carlos Monsiváis, "Dos de octubre", *Sábado*, No.46, 30 Sept. 1978, p.3.

⁵⁷ Carlos Monsiváis, "La represión como ideología", *La Cultura en México*, No.340, 21 Aug. 1968, p.x.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p.x.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p.x.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, pp.x-xi.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p.xi.

⁶² Poniatowska, "El movimiento estudiantil", p.23; Sergio Sarmiento, "Chiapas y los medios", *Este País*, No.37, April 1994, p.38. Poniatowska praised the efforts of Julio Scherer, Daniel Cosío Villegas and Heberto Castillo at *Excelsior* after 2 October 1968. Sarmiento stated that *Excelsior* and *El Norte* in Monterrey provided unbiased coverage of the Student Movement.

⁶³ Antonio Ortega G., "De Santo Tomás al Zócalo: Alumnos y maestros en el gigantesco mitin", *Excelsior*, No.18794, 14 Aug. 1968, pp.1, 15-17. A neutral, factual account of the march to the Zócalo was given; with full coverage of the students' demands. Criticism of the action of the security forces was voiced.

⁶⁴ Carlos Monsiváis, "Intelectuales y artistas (algunos, muchos) en el 68", *La Jornada*, No.3256, 2 Oct. 1993, Suplemento, p.3; Brewster, Interview with Monsiváis, 1996.

⁶⁵ Monsiváis, "Intelectuales y artistas", pp.3, 4; Brewster, Interview with Monsiváis, 1996. Monsiváis, José Revueltas and Juan Rulfo were among the coordinating committee.

⁶⁶ Monsiváis, "Intelectuales y artistas", p.4.

⁶⁷ [N.A.], "Lo que se ha visto y lo que se ha dicho: Una versión del movimiento estudiantil, fotos y antología 23 de julio a 17 de septiembre", *La Cultura en México*, No.345, 25 Sept. 1968, pp.i-xvi. Many of these photographs would be reproduced in Poniatowska's *La noche de Tlatelolco*.

⁶⁸ Carlos Monsiváis, "El movimiento oficial: Notas a partir de una brillante campaña militar", *La Cultura en México*, No.346, 2 Oct. 1968, p.xiii. The publication details are misleading: *La Cultura en México* went to press at least two weeks before its date of issue. Monsiváis's article was dated 18 September 1968.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p.xiii.

⁷⁰ Carlos Monsiváis, "Puntos de vista sobre el Movimiento Estudiantil: Las exigencias del retorno", *La Cultura en México*, No.347, 9 Oct. 1968, p.xvi.

⁷¹ Monsiváis, "Intelectuales y artistas", p.5; Elena Poniatowska, "Habla el escritor Juan García Ponce", *Siempre!*, No.802, 6 Nov. 1968, p.44. García Ponce stressed that what happened to him was unimportant compared to the suffering of others: "Lo que importa es que salgan los muchachos - hay tantos menores de edad - no lo que a mí me pasó. [...] ¡Esto se va a arreglar! ¡Esto se tiene que arreglar! ¡Vas a ver cómo no volveremos a días así!"

⁷² Monsiváis, "Intelectuales y artistas", p.5.

⁷³ Brewster, Interview with Monsiváis, 1996.

⁷⁴ This edition included several articles condemning the events at Tlatelolco and refuting the official

version of what happened. See, Alberto Domingo, "La cruenta cólera tuvo su festín", *Siempre!*, No.799, 16 Oct. 1968, p.14; Leonardo Femat, "La noche de Tlatelolco", *Siempre!*, No.799, 16 Oct. 1968, pp.12-13. Domingo demanded a full investigation. Femat's article contained a transcript of a tape recording of the massacre. It was illustrated by photographs, some of them blurred, depicting heavily armed soldiers; the wounded being carried away; and a scene from the mortuary. The last had the caption, "Los muertos no hablan". The following week *La Cultura en México* published an anonymous testimony of the events in the Plaza de las Tres Culturas. The powerful language chosen in the introduction again challenged the authorised account of the event. In the same issue, the editorial of *Siempre!* looked forward to the opening of Olympic Games. Sarcasm was used to exaggerate the professed government policy to the point of ridicule: it stressed the open and friendly spirit of Mexico and its credentials for staging a celebration of the sporting achievements of young people throughout the world. Monsiváis later explained that such irony would have passed by the government: "En 1968 la clase gobernante [...] cree en lo que lee si es elogio, y juzga a lo leído subversión estricta si es ataque, o si algo pone en duda su buena voluntad." See, [N.A.], "Testimonio de un estudiante, Tlatelolco, 2 de octubre", *La Cultura en México*, No.349, 23 Oct. 1968, pp.viii-ix; Editorial, "México, Capital De La Paz Y De La Amistad", *Siempre!*, No.800, 23 Oct. 1968, pp.16-17; Carlos Monsiváis, "La prensa en los noventa", *Proceso*, No.866, 6 June 1993, p.22.

⁷⁵ Carlos Monsiváis, "Lo real, lo parcial y nuestra historia oficial", *La Cultura en México*, No.353, 20 Nov. 1968, p.xvi.

⁷⁶ Colin Smith, *Collins Spanish-English English-Spanish Dictionary*, (Glasgow, 1990), p.125. The definitions for "captar" are as follows: "Atraer to captivate; apoyo to win, gain, attract; voluntad to gain control over; atención etc. to get, secure; sentido to grasp; persona to win over."

⁷⁷ Carlos Monsiváis, "Cultura national y cultura colonial en la literatura mexicana", *La Cultura en México*, No.355, 4 Dec. 1968, pp.ii-viii.

⁷⁸ Carlos Monsiváis, "1000 mil 1000: No quisiera ponerme muy solemne pero...", *La Cultura en México*, No.1000, 27 May 1981, p.v.

⁷⁹ Ignacio Herrera Cruz, "El cuarto de siglo (en estereo)", *La Cultura en México*, No.1297, 11 Feb. 1987, p.36. Its opening words were, "bienvenidos a este hogar que quiere ser la playa de todos los naufragos que han librado, bajo el signo de la adversidad, la gran batalla por las libertades del hombre".

⁸⁰ Agustín, "Cuarenta años", p.64.

⁸¹ Benitez, "Los días de la ignominia", p.ii-iii.

⁸² Armando Ponce, "Tras 15 años, deja Monsiváis 'por cansancio' *La Cultura en México*", *Proceso*, No.539, 2 March 1987, p.46; [N.A.], "De *Excelsior* a *Proceso*", *Proceso*, No.1, 6 Nov. 1976, pp.12-15. Pagés Llergo also came to the aid of Julio Scherer following the *Excelsior* crisis. He offered the use of offices at *Siempre!* until such time as *Proceso* could afford its own.

⁸³ Carlos Monsiváis to John King, Mexico, April 1994.

⁸⁴ Pacheco continued in the same vein as his predecessor. He marked the beginning of his period as editor with a poem depicting the pain of Tlatelolco; the suffering of those who died and were injured, the cries of the parents, and the sorrow of the Mexican people. See: José Emilio Pacheco, "Lectura de los 'Cantares Mexicanos'", *La Cultura en México*, No.351, 6 Nov. 1968, p.vi.

⁸⁵ Carlos Monsiváis, "Los premios del 68", *La Cultura en México*, No.360, 8 Jan. 1969, p.iv.

⁸⁶ Carlos Monsiváis, *Días de guardar*, (México D.F., 1970), pp.16-17.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, pp.18-19.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, pp.303-304.

⁸⁹ Pacheco, "Monsimarx", p.xiii.

⁹⁰ Monsiváis, *Días de guardar*, p.380.

⁹¹ Monsiváis, "Intelectuales y artistas", p.5.

⁹² Elena Poniatowska, "Diez años después: El rumor de las manifestaciones", *Proceso*, No.100, 2 Oct. 1978, pp.19, 20.

⁹³ Patricia Vega, "Celebra 20 años la primera edición de *La noche de Tlatelolco II*", *La Jornada*, No.2500, 27 Aug. 1991, p.39.

⁹⁴ Elena Poniatowska, "Posición frente a los problemas nacionales", *Siempre!*, No.793, 4 Sept. 1968, pp.60-61.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp.60-61.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp.60-62.

⁹⁷ Elena Poniatowska, "7 días del mundo", *Siempre!*, No.794, 11 Sept. 1968, p.44.

⁹⁸ Brewster, Interview with Poniatowska.

⁹⁹ Elena Poniatowska, "Microcosmos", *Novedades*, No.9950, 18 Sept. 1968, p.5.

¹⁰⁰ Cristina Pacheco, "A diez años de la noche triste de Tlatelolco", *Siempre!*, No.1320, 11 Oct. 1978,

p.58.

- ¹⁰¹ Elena Poniatowska, "Mariana Yampolsky", *Novedades*, No.9979, 17 Oct. 1968, p.5.
- ¹⁰² *Ibid.*, p.5. The following week, Poniatowska celebrated the success of "El Tibio", the Mexican swimmer who won a gold medal at the Olympic Games. She did not mention the Student Movement.
- ¹⁰³ Margarita García Flores, "Diálogo con Elena Poniatowska", *La Cultura en México*, No.411, 24 Dec. 1969, p.vii.
- ¹⁰⁴ Pacheco, "A diez años", p.30.
- ¹⁰⁵ Brewster, Interview with Poniatowska. Nonetheless, the incident caused sufficient alarm for Poniatowska's husband, Guillermo Haro, to insist that Poniatowska take Mexican citizenship to prevent a possible expulsion to her native France.
- ¹⁰⁶ Marco Antonio Campos, "Elena Poniatowska: No olvidar a los olvidados", *La Cultura en México*, No.2119, 2 Feb. 1994, p.48. Poniatowska explained that Guevara Niebla's family were unable to visit him frequently as they lived in the northern State of Sinaloa. She was not allowed to take a pen and paper with her, and was submitted to the humiliation of full body searches before being allowed inside.
- ¹⁰⁷ See Martin, *Journeys*, p.346; Richard Candida Smith, "¿Quién quiere usted que sea bueno?", *Oral History Review*, 14 (1986), p.78. For Poniatowska's account of her brother's death see, Magdalena García Pinto, *Women Writers of Latin America*, (Austin, 1991), p.164; Poniatowska, *La noche*, p.272.
- ¹⁰⁸ Poniatowska, "El movimiento estudiantil", p.22.
- ¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p.22.
- ¹¹⁰ Poniatowska, *La noche*, pp.132-133.
- ¹¹¹ Poniatowska, "El movimiento estudiantil", p.26.
- ¹¹² Poniatowska, "La prensa en tiempos de Díaz Ordaz", p.9.
- ¹¹³ Pacheco, "A diez años", p.58.
- ¹¹⁴ Gabriel Zaid, "Pudores homicidas", *La Cultura en México*, No.487, 9 June 1971, p.viii.
- ¹¹⁵ Ronald Christ, "The Author as Editor", *Review*, Vol.15, Fall 1975, pp.78-79.
- ¹¹⁶ Eugenia Meyer, "Documenting the Earthquake of 1985 in Mexico City", *Oral History Review*, 16/1, (Spring, 1988): 1-5, pp.3, 4.
- ¹¹⁷ Jørgensen, *The Writing of Elena Poniatowska*, pp.82-83.
- ¹¹⁸ Claire Brewster, interview with Geoffrey Kantaris, Cambridge, 28 March 2000.
- ¹¹⁹ Jean Franco, "Going Public: Reinhabiting the Private", in George Yúdice, Jean Franco, and Juan Flores (eds.), *On Edge: The Crisis of Contemporary Latin American Culture*, (Minneapolis, and London, 1992), pp.70-72.
- ¹²⁰ Arturo García Hernández y Pablo Espinosa, "Sin Vargas Llosa, las conclusiones del Encuentro Vuelta por Canal 2", *La Jornada*, No.2146, 2 Sept. 1990, p.38.
- ¹²¹ Elsa Jascalevich, "Entrevista a Elena Poniatowska: Me cuesta un trabajo infinito decir no", *Sábado*, No.111, 29 Dec. 1979, p.6.
- ¹²² Pacheco, "A diez años", p.58.
- ¹²³ Steele, "Entrevista: Elena Poniatowska", p.102.
- ¹²⁴ Pacheco, "A diez años", p.58.
- ¹²⁵ Poniatowska, *La noche*, pp.120-121, 157.
- ¹²⁶ Héctor Manjarrez, "Memorias del 68, secuestros, 10 de junio, Avándaro", *La Cultura en México*, No.517, 5 Jan. 1972, p.ii.
- ¹²⁷ Carlos Monsiváis, "Fuerte es el silencio: El silencio de los marginados es la sordera de los marginadores", *Proceso*, No.220, 19 Jan. 1981, p.12.
- ¹²⁸ Octavio Paz, "A cinco años de Tlatelolco", *Obras completas*, Tomo 8, (México D.F., 1994), p.327.
- ¹²⁹ Pacheco, "A diez años", p.58.
- ¹³⁰ Elena Poniatowska, "Con Méndez Arceo", *Siempre!*, No.863, 7 Jan. 1970, p.34.
- ¹³¹ Steele, *Politics, Gender*, p.11.
- ¹³² Steele, "Entrevista: Elena Poniatowska", p.98.
- ¹³³ Brewster, Interview with Monsiváis, 1996.
- ¹³⁴ Carlos Monsiváis, "Elena Poniatowska múltiple y única", *La Jornada*, No.3685, 11 Dec. 1994, p.26.
- ¹³⁵ Carlos Monsiváis, "A veinte años de *La noche de Tlatelolco*", *La Jornada Semanal*, No.122, 13 Oct. 1991, pp.20-21.
- ¹³⁶ Héctor Aguilar Camín, "Contra la noche del poder los días de la euforia", *Nexos*, No.9, Sept. 1978, p.22.
- ¹³⁷ Vega, "Celebra 20 años", p.40. The average number of copies sold in Mexico is 1,000.
- ¹³⁸ Scherer, "Salinas, modernización", p.8; Elena Poniatowska, (trans. Helen R. Lane), *Massacre in Mexico*, (New York, 1975).
- ¹³⁹ Jørgensen, *The Writing of Elena Poniatowska*, p.76.

- ¹⁴⁰ Patricia Vega, "Celebró los 20 años de un libro de formación, *La noche de Tlatelolco* /II", *La Jornada*, No.2501, 28 Aug. 1991, p.39.
- ¹⁴¹ Elena Poniatowska, "La muerte de Armando Castillejos", *Proceso*, No.117, 29 Jan. 1979, pp.42-43.
- ¹⁴² Paz, *Posdata*, p.38.
- ¹⁴³ Poniatowska, "7 días del mundo", p.44.
- ¹⁴⁴ Araceli Muñoz Valencia, "Nací, y me eduqué", p.53.
- ¹⁴⁵ [N.A.], "Llamo a la juventud", *La Cultura en México*, No.345, 25 Sept. 1968, p.ix.
- ¹⁴⁶ Octavio Paz, "Elegía a un compañero muerto en el frente de Aragón", *Libertad bajo palabra Obra poética, 1935-1958*, (México D.F., 1960), p.229.
- ¹⁴⁷ Paz quoted in Camp, *Intellectuals and the State*, pp.211-212.
- ¹⁴⁸ A.P., "Renuncié, no fui despedido, dice Paz", *Excélsior*, No.18860, 20 Oct. 1968, p.13.
- ¹⁴⁹ Octavio Paz, quoted by Poniatowska, *La noche*, p.265.
- ¹⁵⁰ Valdivieso, "Entre el tlatoani y el caudillo", p.ii.
- ¹⁵¹ Jean Wetz, "Entrevista con Octavio Paz", *Le Monde*, 14 Nov. 1968, reproduced by Rafael Rodríguez Castañeda, "Octavio Paz a *Le Monde* en 1968", *Proceso*, No.986, 25 Sept. 1995, pp.16, 18.
- ¹⁵² [N.A.], "Commentary", *Times Literary Supplement*, 17 Oct. 1968, p.1183.
- ¹⁵³ Octavio Paz, "México: Olimpiada de 1968", *La Cultura en México*, No.350, 30 Oct. 1968, p.iii. The poem is as follows: La limpidez / (Quizá valga la pena / Escribirlo sobre la limpieza / De esta hoja) / No es límpida: / Es una rabia / (Amarilla y negra / Acumulación de bilis en español) / Extendida sobre la página. / ¿Por qué?
La vergüenza es ira / Vuelta contra uno mismo: / Si / Una nación entera se avergüenza / Es león que se agazapa / Para saltar. / (Los empleados / Municipales lavan la sangre / En la Plaza de los Sacrificios.) / Mira ahora, / Manchada / Antes de haber dicho algo / Que valga la pena, / La limpidez.
- ¹⁵⁴ A.P., "Renuncié", pp.1, 13.
- ¹⁵⁵ Froylán M. López Narváez, "Renuncia de Paz", *Excélsior*, No.18861, 21 Oct. 1968, p.7.
- ¹⁵⁶ Nikito Nipongo, "El guante negro de Octavio Paz", *Siempre!*, No.802, 6 Nov. 1968, p.5; Manuel Moreno Sánchez, "Octavio Paz: El derecho a renunciar", *Excélsior*, No.18868, 28 Oct. 1968, pp.6, 9. Moreno Sánchez, too, praised Paz's protest.
- ¹⁵⁷ Fernando Benítez, José Emilio Pacheco, Carlos Monsiváis y Vicente Rojo, "Nuestra solidaridad con Octavio Paz", *La Cultura en México*, No.351, 6 Nov. 1968, p.ii. The following edition published further support for Paz: Many authors, "Dos mensajes a Octavio Paz", *La Cultura en México*, No.352, 13 Nov. 1968, p.ix. Poniatowska was among the signatories.
- ¹⁵⁸ Enrique Orozco Aranda, "Paz, ¿oportunista?", *Siempre!*, No.802, 6 Nov. 1968, p.5.
- ¹⁵⁹ Roberto Blanco Moheno, "Ser intelectual no es ser inteligente: Tienen derecho a odiar al gobierno", *Siempre!*, No.802, 6 Nov. 1968, p.70; Carlos Monsiváis, *A ustedes les consta*, (México D.F., 1980), pp.59-60. Monsiváis drew attention to Blanco Moheno's "estilo previsible y febril" describing him as, "un personaje del exceso". In 1979 Blanco Moheno became a PRI diputado.
- ¹⁶⁰ Seen in particular, Octavio Paz, *El mono gramático*, (Barcelona, 1974) and *Vislumbres de la India*, (Barcelona, 1995).
- ¹⁶¹ MacAdam, "Octavio Paz: Tiempos, lugares", p.16.
- ¹⁶² Poniatowska, *La noche*, pp.75, 264.
- ¹⁶³ José Revueltas, "Aquí, un mensaje a Octavio Paz", *La Cultura en México*, No.402, 22 Oct. 1969, p.xi.
- ¹⁶⁴ The significance of "godfather" in Mexico is far greater than its translation suggests. A padrino is a substitute father, a spiritual guide and a friend. University students traditionally elect padrinos in different disciplines.
- ¹⁶⁵ Octavio Paz, "A los jóvenes", *La Cultura en México*, No.426, 8 April 1970, p.v.
- ¹⁶⁶ Paz, *Posdata*, pp.21-31.
- ¹⁶⁷ González Llaca, "Octavio Paz: Borges sin gracia", p.7. González Llaca emphasised that Paz kept in close touch with events in Mexico even when he was abroad.
- ¹⁶⁸ Paz, *Posdata*, pp.34-36, 40.
- ¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, pp.40, 154.
- ¹⁷⁰ Paz, Octavio "The World as Foundation", *Times Literary Supplement*, 14 Nov. 1968, p.1284.
- ¹⁷¹ Paz, *Posdata*, pp.51, 54-55.
- ¹⁷² Carlos Fuentes, "Mexico and Its Demons", *New York Review of Books*, Vol.20, No.14, 20 Sept. 1973, p.19.
- ¹⁷³ Paz, *Posdata*, pp.55, 69, 73.
- ¹⁷⁴ Scherer, "Salinas, modernización", p.8.
- ¹⁷⁵ Fuentes, "Mexico and Its Demons", p.19.
- ¹⁷⁶ Paz, *Posdata*, p.113.

- ¹⁷⁷ Fuentes, "Mexico and Its Demons", pp.16, 19.
- ¹⁷⁸ Antonio Deltoro, "Las responsabilidades de Huitzilopochtli", *Nexos*, No.9, Sept. 1978, p.23.
- ¹⁷⁹ Octavio Paz, "A cinco años de Tlatelolco", *Obras completas*, Tomo VIII, (México D.F., 1994), p.328.
- ¹⁸⁰ Octavio Paz, *Conjunciones y disyunciones*, (Barcelona, 1969), pp.181-182; Octavio Paz, "Twilight of Revolution", *Dissent*, Winter 1974, p.61.
- ¹⁸¹ Scherer, "Salinas, modernización", p.8.
- ¹⁸² Enrique Krauze, "Octavio Paz: Facing the Century. A Reading of *Tiempo nublado*", *Salmagundi*, Nos.70-71, Spring-Summer 1986, p.151.
- ¹⁸³ Scherer, "Salinas, modernización", p.8.
- ¹⁸⁴ Paz quoted in Camp, *Intellectuals and the State*, pp.211-212.
- ¹⁸⁵ Valdivieso, "Entre el tlatoani y el caudillo", p.ii.
- ¹⁸⁶ José Emilio Pacheco, "México 1972: Los escritores y la política", *Plural*, No.13, Oct. 1972, p.25.
- ¹⁸⁷ Guillermo Ochoa, "Sí, vengo a quedarme, si puedo", *Excelsior*, No.19698, 19 Feb. 1971, p.1.
- ¹⁸⁸ Fuentes, *Tiempo mexicano*, p.154.
- ¹⁸⁹ Fuentes, *Diana*, p.63.
- ¹⁹⁰ The similarities between Fuentes and his narrator are discussed in chapter one.
- ¹⁹¹ Martin, *Journeys*, p.258; Claire Brewster, Interview with Guillermo Sheridan, Mexico City, 4 Nov. 1996. Sheridan pointed out that this is a view shared by many Mexicans.
- ¹⁹² Fuentes, *Diana*, p.65.
- ¹⁹³ A section of this letter is quoted in Cronos, "Del otra jueves", *Novedades*, No.9979, 17 Oct. 1968, p.4. Jean Paul Sartre was among those signed it.
- ¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p.4.
- ¹⁹⁵ Fuentes, "Carta al Director", p.vi. The letter is dated 30 October 1968. Fuentes was not exaggerating: in March 1962, he had joined fellow authors Fernando Benítez, Víctor Flores Olea and León Roberto García to investigate the death of Rubén Jaramillo. The consequent article led to a withdrawal of government advertising from *Siempre!*. As discussed in chapter one, it was at this time that Paz agreed to represent President López Mateos in India. Hence, Paz and Fuentes held contradictory political stances. See, Fuentes, *Tiempo mexicano*, pp.109-139; Krauze, *Mexico*, pp.642-643.
- ¹⁹⁶ Fuentes, "Carta al Director", p.vi.
- ¹⁹⁷ Carlos Fuentes, 1991, quoted in Castañeda, *Utopia Unarmed*, p.182.
- ¹⁹⁸ Fuentes, "Carta al Director", p.vi.
- ¹⁹⁹ Javier Fernández Aguilar, "Fuentes habla con tribuna de censura y miseria en México", *Siempre!*, No.972, 9 Feb. 1972, p.43. Fuentes did not specify the identity of his opponents.
- ²⁰⁰ Guillermo Ochoa, "Fuentes: Basta de Pentotal", *Excelsior*, No.18992, 4 March 1969, p.5.
- ²⁰¹ Fuentes may have believed he had sufficient prestige not to be in any personal danger, but this does not diminish his efforts.
- ²⁰² David A. Brading (ed.), *Caudillo and Peasant in the Mexican Revolution*, (Cambridge, 1980), p.2. Díaz is reputed to have said, "Madero has unleashed a tiger. Now let us see if he can control it."
- ²⁰³ Ochoa, "Fuentes", p.5.
- ²⁰⁴ Fuentes, *Tiempo mexicano*, p.191.
- ²⁰⁵ Margarita García Flores, "Aclarar los humos del pasado, volver el pasado presentable", *La Cultura en México*, No.394, 27 Aug. 1969, p.iii.
- ²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p.iii.
- ²⁰⁷ Alberto Beltrán, "El día dominguero: La nueva pirámide", *El Día*, No.2794, 29 March 1970, p.3.
- ²⁰⁸ Carlos Fuentes, "Dos o tres pirámides", *La Cultura en México*, No.427, 15 April 1970, pp.ii-iii.
- ²⁰⁹ Héctor Manjarrez, "Memorias del 68, secuestros, 10 de junio, Avándaro", *La Cultura en México*, No.517, 5 Jan. 1972, p.iv.
- ²¹⁰ Fuentes, *Tiempo mexicano*, p.155.
- ²¹¹ It should be added that these words, written few days after Javier Barros Sierra's death, also served as his obituary. See Carlos Fuentes, "Sentido de una lucha y de dos políticas", *La Cultura en México*, No.503, 29 Sept. 1971, pp.ii-iv, vi-vii.
- ²¹² Valdivieso, "Entre el tlatoani y el caudillo", p.ii.
- ²¹³ Fuentes, *Tiempo mexicano*, pp.151, 155-157, 162.
- ²¹⁴ Weijers, "Intellectuals, Knowledge and Democracy", p.27.
- ²¹⁵ Paz, *Posdata*, pp.51, 54-55.

3. Realignments and repercussions: the aftermath of 1968

Luis Echeverría Alvarez (1970-1976): The president who courted intellectuals

At the time of the Tlatelolco massacre, Secretary of Internal Affairs, Luis Echeverría Alvarez, had already been selected as the next presidential candidate. Renowned for his “inflexibility and intolerance”, Echeverría’s task during the 1970 election campaign was to convince the Mexican people that he deserved their support.¹ Echeverría promised change, pledging a “whole gamut of reforms” to defuse tension and restore faith in the federal government.² Using the image of former president Lázaro Cárdenas as his model, Echeverría worked to improve relationships with the campesinos and indigenous groups. Roads and schools would be built, and electricity supplied to rural communities. In an attempt to appease the students, young people would be included in his government and the voting age was lowered to eighteen. To distance his successor from the Tlatelolco massacre, perhaps, Díaz Ordaz assumed responsibility for the event in his address to the nation on 1 September 1969.³ Echeverría took a further step away from personal involvement by publicly observing one minute’s silence for the victims. He repeated the gesture at his inaugural ceremony on 1 December 1970.⁴ Echeverría was duly elected; yet, as Poniatowska pointed out, there was a significant drop in popularity of the PRI: more people voted against Echeverría than for him. She concluded that Mexicans used the ballot to protest about recent political events; in particular, the massacre at Tlatelolco.⁵

To capitalise on the promises of the president-elect, Poniatowska wrote against the severity of the prison sentences imposed upon those involved in the Student Movement. As an example she used the case of UNAM philosophy lecturer Eli de

Gortari who had been in prison for 600 days. Poniatowska calculated the percentage of his life and those of members of his immediate family that this period constituted.⁶ The inclusion of such detail emphasised the length of time, the impact of his imprisonment on his relatives, and Poniatowska's close contact with them. To highlight the ongoing human tragedy of Tlatelolco, Poniatowska pointed out that de Gortari's daughter had been born after his imprisonment: the next generation was already suffering the impact of the government repression.

Poniatowska's essay was published at a time when it was hoped Echeverría would relax measures taken against political prisoners, yet de Gortari emphasised his isolation: his colleagues outside the prison were too afraid to send him books or reading matter. Poniatowska stressed that although a new president would shortly be sworn in, nothing had changed for those incarcerated by the regime.⁷ The plight of the political prisoners was understandably an important concern for Poniatowska. She had spent many hours talking to those in Lecumberri, and used her intellectual power to highlight their cases and hasten their release. At the end of the first edition of *La noche de Tlatelolco*, she noted that twenty-eight of those detained in 1968 had been liberated and named the participants in the book who had been freed.⁸ She thus stressed the many more who remained in prison. A small step had been taken, but it was an insufficient measure: without overtly stating it, Poniatowska directed all those who felt outraged after reading her book to insist upon an amnesty.

His apparently flexible, tolerant approach enabled President Echeverría to restore a working relationship with many intellectuals. Echeverría saw the merits in repairing the rift between the government and intellectuals. Aware of the need to make

amends to the next generation and in keeping with his pre-election promises, he included university lecturers into his cabinet, and poured money into UNAM.⁹ The strong emphasis on youth was apparent at all political levels. While Poniatowska was aware that young people were officially controlled within the government, she also believed an important, vital force was built.¹⁰ Monsiváis stressed that Echeverría had no choice but to incorporate the students.¹¹ Roderic Camp suggested that economic security and the hope of gaining political influence were instrumental in the intellectuals' compliance. He added, "most intellectuals described the Díaz Ordaz administration as one which depreciated their prestige and that of [...] Echeverría as an administration which improved their image".¹² Aware of the irreparable damage to Díaz Ordaz by his dogmatic attitude towards intellectual critics, Echeverría made some concessions: in early 1971 Demetrio Vallejo, Valentín Campa, and several political prisoners detained in 1968 were released; greater freedom of the press and more critical comment were allowed. Echeverría's foreign policy was widely supported by the Left and set a pattern that presidents López Portillo and De la Madrid would follow. Links with Cuba were increased and close ties with Chile's Socialist government were forged.¹³ Luis Pazos, however, suggested that Echeverría was too conciliatory; he claimed that left-wing intellectuals, economists and politicians in Echeverría's government generated inflation and caused workers to lose their purchasing power.¹⁴

Sergio Zermeno wrote that after 1968 those opposed to the government were faced with three choices: radical action, in the form of guerrilla activity; migration to rural and impoverished urban communities to foster support for revolutionary change; or to use the political system to effect a democratic transformation.¹⁵ Those who opted for the last option had Echeverría's support. Echeverría offered economic assistance to

Heberto Castillo to create a political party after the latter's release from prison. Unwilling to be coopted, in 1973 Castillo instead formed the more independent Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores (PST).¹⁶

Far from expressing gratitude towards Echeverría, Poniatowska stressed that achievements gained during his government were largely due to the students themselves. She registered the major victory of the Student Movement as the daily pressure that forced Echeverría to include young people in political affairs.¹⁷ Poniatowska believed that Echeverría was partly to blame for the Tlatelolco massacre.¹⁸ Yet like those who were included in Echeverría's administration, rather than rail against the president, she tried to exploit his supposedly flexible image through her articles.

Fuentes shared Poniatowska's view, although their reasons differed: for Fuentes, Díaz Ordaz was uniquely responsible for the massacre at Tlatelolco. As the new president, and the most powerful man in Mexico, Fuentes saw Echeverría as the means of propagating political change.¹⁹ In October 1968 Fuentes had identified two distinct roles for intellectuals: some contested the system from within, others challenged it from a distance.²⁰ In criticising Díaz Ordaz, Fuentes was placed in the latter category; his association with President Echeverría would entrench Fuentes in the former. When he returned to Mexico in 1969, Maarten Van Delden stated that Fuentes was "looking for a way to channel his sense of political responsibility".²¹ Because of the absolute nature of presidential power in Mexico, Fuentes felt that he could achieve these aims by being close to Echeverría. His strong criticism of Díaz Ordaz had done nothing to effect presidential policy; he believed that he had a better prospect of changing the system by working within it.

Views voiced in August 1969 provide a further insight into Fuentes's reasoning:

Un Guzmán o un Novo creen que las palabras sólo sirven para festejar al poderoso: sus palabras se pronuncian y se escriben en la cámara cerrada de las antesalas y las banquetas. Un Octavio Paz, en cambio, sabe que la inteligencia y la moral son inseparables. Por eso a Octavio lo leen apasionadamente los jóvenes que se burlan y desprecian a los escritores oficiales.²²

While Fuentes condemned Guzmán's and Novo's support of Díaz Ordaz, he was aware that the words of intellectuals who served the government were listened to by those in power, whereas authors such as Paz provided a code of thought and behaviour for those in favour of political change. Did Fuentes, who had witnessed Pablo Neruda's impact on the Chilean working class, aspire to be an intellectual who was heeded by everyone? Could one man's ideas both inspire the reformist youth and become an integral part of presidential policies? Such a figure could have a tremendous influence on political and social change. Fuentes, who had recognised the possibility of "expropiar la sociedad civil" from government control, would surely relish the opportunity of seeing his ideas put into practice.²³ In 1976, Fuentes proclaimed, "lo que hicieron [... los muralistas] lo vamos a hacer también nosotros. Grandes cosas, sí haremos grandes cosas." Poniowska described him as "eufórico, atigrado e impetuoso".²⁴ An ambitious and confident Fuentes saw himself as one of a team of intellectuals who would work closely with the government to shape a democratic culture.

Fuentes saw much to appreciate in Echeverría. He particularly welcomed his apparent moves towards democratic change.²⁵ In *Tiempo mexicano*, Fuentes decried Díaz Ordaz's policies and his tactics to combat the student protests, and praised Echeverría for opting for a different political direction. These observations, published

in 1971, can be seen as throwing down the gauntlet at the start of Echeverría's term of office; congratulating the president in advance for his enlightened approach. Fuentes spoke out against the anti-democratic nature of politics. He warned that Mexicans were tired of lies, false promises and exploitation, and were likely to become "explosivamente impaciente" as in 1968.²⁶ In August 1972, Fuentes affirmed the need to include popular organisations at a State level: the impulse for change should come from below to ensure that local concerns shaped the form of national policy. He favoured "una alianza popular independiente [...] el socialismo democrático":

La nueva y vieja democracia mexicana que, esta vez, recobre todos los cabos sueltos y las promesas suspendidas que la revolución de 1910 no pudo reintegrar a nuestra vida colectiva. [...] El camino del pasado inmediato no es la "vía mexicana". Esta la debemos todavía encontrar y recorrer en el futuro.²⁷

Fuentes sought further to encourage Echeverría by claiming that the president could steer Mexico along the democratic road. And Fuentes could congratulate himself: days after the article was published, Echeverría repeated some of Fuentes's sentiments:

Es necesario [...] que se llegue a la médula de las cuestiones nacionales, y sobre todo en el Sector Popular, para un replantamiento en la raíz misma de nuestros pensamientos y de nuestras definiciones y de nuestras actitudes concretas en lo más íntimo de nosotros mismos, para edificar, desde allí, una nueva moral revolucionaria.²⁸

Echeverría voiced the need to break with the immediate past, to include the popular sector in the construction of a better future. His use of the word "revolutionary" seemed to imply that he, like Fuentes, accepted the ideals of the Revolution and wanted to see them put into practice. Echeverría indicated that his vision was that of the "vía mexicana".

There was a special place for critical comment in Echeverría's scheme:

Una paz pública sin libertades, un sistema político en que los líderes sociales, los intelectuales o los ciudadanos son callados y perseguidos, ya lo vivimos antes de la Revolución y el pueblo mexicano jamás toleraría otra dictadura cualquiera que fuera su signo ideológico.²⁹

Echeverría distanced himself from the past dictatorships; for proof, he pointed to his investment in education and the twenty-seven political prisoners he had freed. He may only have been paying lip-service to Fuentes's comments, but in so doing Echeverría showed himself to be a different breed from his predecessor. If Fuentes was playing a tactical game by promoting Echeverría as a champion of change, Echeverría, too, may have had a broader agenda. Yet for Fuentes, the result was perhaps more important than how it was achieved. In contrast to Díaz Ordaz, Echeverría at least acknowledged the presence of intellectuals and the need for critical comment. Like Guzmán and Novo under Díaz Ordaz, Fuentes appeared to be heeded by Echeverría. Fuentes had reason to believe that he was influential, and it was little wonder that he sought to capitalise on this political climate.

Fuentes's support for Echeverría was not unconditional. Indeed, it can be argued that he was one of Echeverría's more vocal and effective critics. Discussing the Padilla Affair in May 1971, Fuentes stressed that all was not well at home.³⁰ At a time when the western world was condemning Cuba for its repressive stance against writers, Fuentes emphasised, "uno de nuestros mejores escritores, José Revueltas, continúa injustamente encarcelado".³¹ Fuentes directly challenged Echeverría to free the remaining political prisoners; days later, Revueltas was released.³² In August 1971, Fuentes wrote of the need to open communication channels to encourage public expression. If not, he stated, "no puede haber apertura ni democracia".³³ By implying at

this early stage that Echeverría's democratic opening could fail, Fuentes applied pressure on the president to ensure its success. In early 1972 Fuentes believed an opening had been achieved: "Sí hay una apertura democrática, pero no concedida graciosamente por el Estado."³⁴ Here Fuentes differentiated between presidential policy and the desires of the State. The inference, whether justified or not, is that Fuentes considered Echeverría to be fulfilling his pre-electoral promises and that he merited public support for standing up to the State.

Appraising Echeverría in 1973, Fuentes also perhaps measured his own influence on presidential policy:

Echeverría heard complaints and saw misery. The students and intellectuals imprisoned in 1968 were freed. A new climate of intellectual criticism, debate in the press, and a national dialogue was substituted for the politics of silence. [...] Self-congratulation was replaced by self-criticism, the existence of Mexico's problems, old and new, was admitted.³⁵

Whereas Poniatowska attributed the transformation of Mexican society to the pressures brought by the Student Movement, Fuentes presented Echeverría as the protagonist. Moreover, intellectuals had a part to play in the new order: Fuentes perceived Echeverría to be adopting, albeit partially, some of his political proposals. He called for increased support to enable Echeverría to enact more changes:

The government walks a tightrope. It has so far avoided a real tax reform. It also evades true political reform. Its positive policies are implemented from the top; they frighten the upper-class minorities; they do not, in themselves, assure popular support, which Echeverría badly needs.³⁶

Fuentes viewed the elite as a barrier to the attainment of Echeverría's reforms: a powerful political opponent that was firmly tied to the traditional, conservative elements of the PRI. He felt that the rest of Mexican society should unite behind Echeverría to

achieve an economic and political transformation. For Fuentes, Echeverría was the only means through which democracy could be achieved. If Echeverría were to fail, so Fuentes's hopes for change would fade away. Fuentes saw two possible paths for Mexico: those outlined by Paz in *Posdata*, "democratic social reform or reactionary violence". The failure of the former, Fuentes stated, would bring "an explosion of anarchy followed by a reversion to the politics of the pyramid, or a dictatorship of Mexican capitalists, the military, and United States business interests followed by easily crushed rebellions". Fuentes sustained that it would benefit all Mexicans if Echeverría were to succeed.

Fuentes noted that critical comment was flourishing:

Criticism [...] found a response in, or at least coincided with, the Echeverría regime's so-called "democratic opening" and its rejection of the twin solutions of *desarrollismo* and repression. Paz conceded as much by saying that Echeverría had "listened to the rumblings of history".³⁷

Fuentes did not explain the motivation for Echeverría's modification; for him, the imperative was that change was achieved, not how and why it was obtained. Nor did Fuentes comment upon his own role in the process. His use of the qualifier "so-called" is intriguing: was he merely repeating the popular form of the phrase, or doubting the authenticity of Echeverría's democratic opening? Fuentes was, perhaps, deliberately ambiguous,³⁸ his support Echeverría was not unconditional. His inclusion of Paz's partial praise of Echeverría substantiates Fuentes's quandary. As if in self-defence, Fuentes then spoke of the need for political education: "outside the PRI, as Paz proposes, but also inside the PRI; in collective farms, co-operatives, factories, universities, state enterprises and the press".³⁹ Fuentes was arguably seeking to provide such instruction through his essays. Here, Fuentes emphasised the difference between

his views and those of Paz. While both sought democratic change, Paz inferred that the impulse should come from outside the system, Fuentes determined it could be best achieved from within it. Fuentes chose to express these misgivings in the US press. He perhaps preferred to adopt a more assured tone when writing for his home audience, instilling public confidence in the president, and portraying himself as an intellectual with an agenda that was in keeping with presidential and popular aspirations.

Yet, as Fuentes stated, Paz had not been not immune to Echeverría's advances. When he returned to Mexico in 1971, Paz explained why he had not gone back sooner: "Decidí esperar un poco: era claro que la represión no podría prolongarse y que pronto se abrirían espacios libres que harían posible la crítica y el debate."⁴⁰ Like Fuentes, Paz initially deemed that his criticism of the government would be more effectively made outside the country. Paz remained in close contact with the political situation in Mexico: in January 1970 he claimed that Mexico faced two possible alternatives, "democratización o dictadura".⁴¹ The following year Paz sensed that spaces had been opened for criticism and debate. How did he believe this had been achieved?

Veo que en la prensa se menciona la palabra autocrítica, y que el Presidente Echeverría la ha mencionado. Excelente. [...] Pero hay que señalar [...] que la autocrítica sólo es una parte de la crítica; la otra parte es oír la crítica de los otros. Sólo así podría restablecerse el diálogo en México. [...] Todo los mexicanos] deberíamos colaborar lealmente, nosotros deberíamos oír al Gobierno y hablar con el Gobierno. Entiendo el diálogo como crítica plural y creadora. [...] Que todos hablen de sus problemas.⁴²

Like Fuentes, Paz appreciated the change of political atmosphere. Unlike Poniatowska, he did not mention the role played by the students in this process. For Paz, Echeverría had opened spaces for critical comment and was providing an opportunity for constructive debate. In common with Fuentes, Paz wanted to be part of that process.

He accepted the post as editor of *Plural*; the first issue of which appeared in October 1971. Did Paz return to Mexico because he believed that democratic change was possible under Echeverría? Paz evidently felt he could contribute to democratic debates; like Fuentes he perhaps perceived himself to be worthy of an unofficial advisory position; one whose criticism was heard by the president.

Intellectual participation was apparently foremost in Paz's mind: in March 1971, just one month after his return, Paz directly asked Echeverría about the relationship between writers and those in power. Paz was apparently satisfied with the answer: "A mi me parece que ha sido una declaración muy positiva como otras que ha hecho sobre temas semejantes. En efecto, no es posible concebir en el mundo moderno el ejercicio del arte o el ejercicio de la ciencia sin la libertad." Paz applauded Echeverría's recognition of the need for freedom of expression. He voiced great faith in the president: "Es muy significativo que la iniciativa para renovar la atmósfera política, moral e intelectual de México, venga del presidente Echeverría. Esto significa que es un hombre que sabe oír, que sabe escuchar el rumor popular, el rumor confuso de la historia." Paz evidently believed Echeverría had made a good beginning and, like Fuentes, perhaps hoped to inspire the president to make more far-reaching political changes. He drew links with the students' demands: "En 1968 [...] la palabra clave fue democratización y correspondía a lo que quería y quiere el pueblo de México. En 1971 la palabra clave es crítica, diálogo crítico entre el poder y el pueblo." Significantly, Paz neglected to mention that Echeverría had been Secretary of Internal Affairs in 1968. He seemed prepared to draw a line under the Tlatelolco massacre. Times had changed; Mexican aspirations were different. In common with Fuentes, in early 1971 Paz was looking forward: "Es un cambio positivo, es un buen cambio."⁴³

10 June 1971: Jueves de Corpus

The students soon became uneasy with Echeverría's policies. Despite his apparent sympathy for the victims of Tlatelolco and the expansion of funding to the universities, persistent government scrutiny underlined the restrictive nature of Echeverría's gestures. Castillo noted that universities remained a target of official aggression.⁴⁴ Echeverría's reputation as a reformer was put to the test on 10 June 1971 when approximately 8,000 students staged a demonstration at the Monument of the Revolution, Mexico City. The reasons for the rally remain subject to debate;⁴⁵ its conclusion was all too apparent. Eye-witnesses Enrique Krauze and Héctor Aguilar Camín stated that government security units, *halcones*, joined the march as provocateurs causing damage to buildings while chanting revolutionary slogans.⁴⁶ The area was sealed off as 900 security agents released tear gas on the demonstrators; the *halcones* then attacked the students as they attempted to escape. As at Tlatelolco, estimates of those left dead vary, but it is generally agreed that between thirty and fifty people were killed, with many more wounded.⁴⁷ Hours after the event, that would be known as "Jueves de Corpus", the Regent of Mexico City, Alfonso Martínez Domínguez, claimed the *halcones* were a product of popular imagination: no such unit existed.⁴⁸

That evening Paz cancelled a public reading of his poems and instead drafted a condemnation of the affair.⁴⁹ Among the many signatories were Fuentes, Monsiváis, Fernando Benítez, and José Emilio Pacheco. Published in *Excelsior* the strongly worded article stated that a peaceful demonstration was attacked by armed, trained groups deployed to prevent the students from exercising their democratic rights. They demanded an investigation:

La opinión tiene derecho a saber: ¿Quién adiestra a estos grupos, quién les paga y a quienes sirven? Uno de estas bandas asesinó [...] a los jóvenes

mexicanos inermes. [...] Exigimos la disolución inmediata de esos grupos de gangsters políticos obviamente movidos por fuerzas de la derecha dentro y fuera del gobierno.⁵⁰

The authors of the document evidently saw themselves as representatives of public opinion; as politicians had not taken the initiative, they assumed the role of adjudicators. They pointedly added that the *halcones* had sponsors in the government, as well as outside it. At this stage no personal blame was apportioned, although suspicion was attached to right-wing forces.

Echeverría was quick to react; he distanced himself from personal involvement and ordered an immediate and full inquiry, promising that the culprits would be punished.⁵¹ As after 'Tlatelolco', speculation about the event was widespread, Echeverría spoke of "una trampa política".⁵² Martínez Domínguez and the chief of police, Rogelio Flores Curiel, offered their resignations, both had been close to President Díaz Ordaz; Martínez Domínguez was president of the PRI during his regime.

Paz followed the protest letter with an article examining the corruption of words in Mexico, and stressing the need to look beyond them: "Revolución se ha convertido en sinónimo de burocracia política, desarrollo quiere decir enriquecimiento para unos pocos y escasez para la mayoría, democracia no ha significado pluralidad de voces, sino monólogo de un jefe." Revolutionary values had been corrupted into autocratic rule; Paz called for the true meaning of words to be restored. He urged Echeverría to fulfil his promise and conduct a full investigation. To encourage Echeverría, Paz added: "primero fue la autocrítica y después algo más difícil: tolerar la crítica de los otros, aceptar que disentir no es un crimen, sino un derecho y, a veces, un deber".⁵³ Paz acknowledged that Echeverría had moved away from the tradition of judging any form

of criticism to be "sacrilegio",⁵⁴ yet words were easy to pronounce and their significance could be distorted. For Paz, Echeverría's next challenge was to convert his declarations into action.⁵⁵

Paz blamed the bloodshed of Jueves de Corpus on, "un grupo de gangsters políticos" - the *halcones*. He emphasised the difference from the violence of 1968: in 1971 the atmosphere of "libre discusión" allowed public opinion to demand an inquiry and the punishment of the culprits. In addition, in "una maniobra oblicua", Paz believed that by attacking the students, Echeverría's policies were also violated. Paz's analysis at this stage coincided with that promoted by the president: his political enemies were undermining his policies.⁵⁶ Paz maintained, "el Presidente ha devuelto su transparencia a las palabras. Vemos entre todos porque no se vuelvan a enturbiar. Echeverría merece nuestra confianza. Y con ella, cada vez que sea necesario, algo más precioso: nuestra crítica."⁵⁷ Paz was cautious, he was prepared to accept the President's words at face value, but urged vigilance: support Echeverría, but also criticise him.

Unlike the official silence after the Tlatelolco massacre, Echeverría spoke about Jueves de Corpus on television. On 15 June he stated, "contestaré con mucho gusto a todo lo que me pregunte y a todo lo que su conducto público quiera saber". Echeverría's comments were also published in *Siempre!*, and were illustrated by a picture of Echeverría with his young son, Benito. It was emphasised that the boy was named after Benito Juárez, the great Liberal reformer.⁵⁸ The impression created was that Echeverría was a family man, concerned for the next generation, and a politician driven by Liberal ideals.

Echeverría drew attention to the forthcoming inquiry, expressing hope that those responsible would be identified. He endorsed the right to demonstrate: "Manifestar es necesario; necesitamos conocer todas las opiniones." Echeverría claimed that the students were manipulated, they were "meros instrumentos de intereses políticos". Evoking a conspiracy, he added, "hay intereses encaminados a perjudicar a la nación". Echeverría stated that the events of 10 June, had nothing to do with 2 October 1968,⁵⁹ such violence should never be repeated, and the perpetrators would be punished.⁶⁰ Editorials in *Excélsior* commended Echeverría's attitude, praising his "patriotic" determination to conduct a full investigation.⁶¹ Paz recalled that Echeverría bowed to public pressure and pledged an inquiry. Undoubtedly Paz believed that he had played a part in this development. Yet after the publication of "Las palabras máscaras", Paz was accused of "oportunismo, chambismo y servilismo [...y de ser] adulator de Echeverría". Angered and upset by such charges, Paz responded that he was an independent writer, "ajeno de los gobiernos y las sectas". Far from being attached to the government, Paz had consistently kept a critical distance from those with political power.⁶²

When Echeverría called for an investigation into Jueves de Corpus, Paz believed the president had heeded his demand. Later that month, trying to build on this success, Paz stressed the need for popular participation in trade unions.⁶³ It must have been with some satisfaction that the following year Paz heard Echeverría pledge all trade unions to be autonomous entities and that there should be no government interference in their internal affairs. Echeverría emphasised that although the State should determine the direction of national development, he did not favour "[el] dictado arbitrario del poder".⁶⁴ Almost verbatim from *Posdata* Echeverría stated, "México ha elegido la vía democrática hacia el desarrollo".⁶⁵ Paz's satisfaction, whether real or imagined, was

short-lived: the promised inquiry into Jueves de Corpus was not forthcoming and Paz's doubts of Echeverría resurfaced: "Ante el incumplimiento de la promesa, reiteré mi crítica."⁶⁶ In so doing, he assumed a different stance from that of Fuentes, but a rift between them did not immediately develop. Referring to Fuentes and Benitez, Paz recalled that although their discrepancies were often privately voiced, "nunca pensé que yo tenía derecho a condenarlos".⁶⁷ Instead Fuentes was invited by *Plural* to debate the issue in "Los escritores y la política".⁶⁸

Criticism of Fuentes's support of Echeverría had been vocal for some time. In a review of *Tiempo mexicano*, Héctor Manjarrez focused upon a misprint: Fuentes gave the date of Jueves de Corpus, as 10 June 1970, thus placing it in Díaz Ordaz's presidency.⁶⁹ Manjarrez claimed that neither Fuentes nor his editors noticed the error thus proving Fuentes's lack of attention to the details of Echeverría's policies. Yet Fuentes had closely followed Echeverría's agenda. Four days after Jueves de Corpus, Fuentes wrote:

Echeverría optó, de todas maneras, por el cambio de la democratización. Pero, como lo demuestran los hechos del jueves 10 de junio, no desmontó la maquinaria represiva cuya existencia contradecía sus palabras de diálogo, conciliación y crítica. No hay diálogo posible, aún cuando ocupe el centro del escenario, si entre bambalinas están apostados grupos de gánsters armados dispuestos a interrumpirlo en cualquier momento.⁷⁰

While supporting the president, Fuentes stressed that Echeverría's fine words would be in vain unless the repressive machinery of the political system was dismantled. As if challenging Echeverría to take action, Fuentes indicated that the blame for the violence lay in the hands of right-wing forces, "representadas por grupos de choque

paramilitares".⁷¹ While Fuentes strongly condemned the event, he took particular regard not to implicate the president, allowing Echeverría space in which to manoeuvre.

Fuentes also revealed the confusion surrounding Jueves de Corpus: "Nadie sabe claramente quién actuó y cómo actuó, quién entrenó a las pandillas fascistas, quién las pagó, quién las armó, quién las transportó. [...] La pregunta central sigue sin respuesta: ¿quién les dio órdenes a los "Halcones" fascistas?" In demanding solutions Fuentes allowed Echeverría an honourable exit. There was a crisis, but authentic democracy could be achieved by combining popular demands with decisive presidential action. He recommended that, "el Presidente, apoyado por la opinión pública, desmonta rápidamente el aparato represivo heredado de 1968, señala y castiga a los culpables, limpia a su gobierno de herencias indeseables". Fuentes emphasised that public opinion should assist, not impede, Echeverría.⁷² Yet, far from ignoring the detail of Echeverría's policies, Fuentes demanded an investigation into Jueves de Corpus. The article was written one day before Echeverría promised a full inquiry into the event. Echeverría's subsequent pledge undoubtedly fuelled Fuentes's self-perception that he was exercising considerable influence upon the president.

Fuentes's stance here sharply contrasts with his comments in *Tiempo mexicano* written after Echeverría had promised an investigation. Indeed, Fuentes imposed his own ideology onto the student protesters of 1971, depicting them as attempting to prove Echeverría's democratic proclamations. Writing when an inquiry appeared to be forthcoming, Fuentes was content to blame Martínez Domínguez. He noted that Echeverría quickly responded to the violence and broke with past traditions by obtaining the resignations of Martínez Domínguez and Rogelio Flores Curiel.⁷³ Fuentes

renewed his call for an investigation: "Si ese crimen no es castigado, será difícil, a pesar de las manifiestas buenas intenciones de Echeverría, creer en su política de apertura democrática. El problema es espinoso porque el crimen de Jueves de Corpus es hijo del crimen de Tlatelolco."⁷⁴ Failure to scrutinise the second use of force against students, less than three years after the first, would jeopardise the democratic opening. Fuentes wanted to draw a line under both incidents, ensuring that such repression was never repeated. Only then could Mexico move forwards.

In February 1972, Fuentes took his firmest stance against Echeverría when he refused the Premio Mazatlán for *Tiempo mexicano* in protest of the Army's occupation of the University of Sinaloa. Fuentes explained, "es incompatible que se premie la disidencia de palabra, en tanto de la disidencia de acción es reprimida".⁷⁵ He evidently saw *Tiempo mexicano* as expressing dissatisfaction with Díaz Ordaz and issuing challenges to President Echeverría, rather than praising the latter as Fuentes's critics suggested. Fuentes's move received little comment at the time, however, and appears to have been generally forgotten afterwards.⁷⁶ One exception was Paz, who acknowledged that within weeks of Fuentes's stance the Army left the university.⁷⁷ Although Fuentes was not alone in his condemnation of the situation in Sinaloa,⁷⁸ he probably perceived his rejection of a prestigious prize to have affected presidential policy. He could already point to other successes such as extending democracy, the reduction of presidential powers, giving trade unions more autonomy, promising an inquiry into Jueves de Corpus, and the freedom of political prisoners. Echeverría was a president who seemed to listen to criticism, and appeared to be acting according to the dictates of his intellectual "consciences". Above all, perhaps, Fuentes wanted to be influential; this ambition shaped his vision of Echeverría.

As mentioned above, Fuentes's relationship with Echeverría was the subject of much comment, "unos apresurados, otros mal intencionados, otros realmente críticos".⁷⁹ Invited by the *Plural* team to defend his position in "Los escritores y la política", Fuentes reiterated concern about the events of 10 June 1971: "Sobre la credibilidad de la administración Echeverría se suspende una nube: la investigación, exhaustivamente prometida, de los sucesos del Jueves de Corpus." Nonetheless, Fuentes applauded Echeverría's achievements; in particular the freeing of political prisoners and his democratic opening. Fuentes noted that Echeverría's aims were long-term: "El Presidente quiere el cambio, pero quiere que sea un cambio irreversible y operatorio más que emocional, a fin de que el siguiente sexenio no destruya la obra del anterior." Again, however, he challenged Echeverría: "los próximos meses nos demostrarán si habrá verdaderas transformaciones y la naturaleza de éstas".⁸⁰

In response, Gabriel Zaid accused Fuentes of using his "prestigio internacional para reforzar al ejecutivo, en vez de reforzar la independencia frente al ejecutivo". Zaid reminded Fuentes that Echeverría's involvement in 1968 had never been clarified, and recommended Fuentes to give Echeverría an ultimatum: open a public inquiry into Jueves de Corpus or lose Fuentes's "apoyo condicionado".⁸¹ In reply, Fuentes proposed an intermediate stage: he would co-sign, with Zaid, a further demand for an investigation, but would not break his ties with the president.⁸²

Why did Fuentes continue to support Echeverría when so many of his peers were renouncing the president? Fuentes might argue that his chosen position was precarious: if he withdrew support for Echeverría, he would lose his means of influencing him. He

believed he had been a strong but constructive critic and that some of his ideas had become official policy. Indeed, even his most bitter opponent acknowledged Fuentes's authority: Krauze wrote, "point by point, Echeverría implemented the political program of Fuentes's intellectual generation as it was summarised in *Tiempo mexicano*".⁸³ Only by being close to the president did Fuentes consider he could achieve such results. Mexico urgently needed political reform and, as far as Fuentes was concerned, Echeverría alone could bring about the necessary changes. Convinced of the merits of his political analysis, Fuentes called upon popular forces to support Echeverría.⁸⁴ In response, Octavio Rodríguez Araujo, although questioning his aims, provided further evidence that Fuentes's views were being heeded. He conceded that, "como coincidencia", two weeks after the publication of Fuentes's "Opciones críticas en el verano de nuestro descontento" the Secretary General of the PRI stated, "sólo con poder popular podrán el presidente Echeverría y el PRI resolver democrática y libremente los problemas del país".⁸⁵

Fuentes's call for popular support was answered by some of his peers. At the beginning of 1972, Castillo, along with other intellectuals and politicians, joined Fuentes to establish the Comité de Consulta y Coordinación. The organisation would act, "dentro de los organismos existentes, para democratizarlos, darles nueva vida, restituir la fe, la energía de los trabajadores". Castillo explained that the authenticity of Echeverría's democratic opening was irrelevant:

Creemos en las presiones populares, en las luchas populares, en los frutos que fueron sembrados en 1968. [...] Reconozcamos que la actitud de Echeverría facilita la concordia, que hace esperar la posibilidad de una lucha política más civil entre los mexicanos. [...] Que haga posible una transformación revolucionaria.⁸⁶

The nature of the group and Castillo's comments shed further light on Fuentes's attitude towards Echeverría. There was an atmosphere in which change was deemed possible. Whether or not Echeverría was sincere, Fuentes genuinely believed that he could exploit this opportunity by working within the Mexican political system, capitalising on Echeverría's promises, and persuading him to take a democratic direction.

Monsiváis was also invited to join "Los escritores y la política". Unlike Fuentes and Castillo, Monsiváis saw little to look forward to:

México 1972: esperanzas nuevamente frustradas, principios de una radicalización irreversible, desarrollo económico puesto oficialmente en duda, crímenes políticos, represión que evita los problemas que crea la represión, [...] inquietud y complacencia generalizadas, demagogia, buena fe como disculpa ante la falta de acción, [...] la "apertura democrática" como promesa de un bien sólo posible cuando nos abstengamos de querer ejercerlo.⁸⁷

Although he had been recently out of the public gaze, Monsiváis had unceasingly scrutinised the political scene, and was constantly aware of the belligerent presidential ogre behind Echeverría's philanthropic mask.

Drawing attention to the lack of an investigation into Jueves de Corpus, Monsiváis had been among the first to cast doubt on Echeverría's democratic opening, depicting it as "una promoción de otoño". Monsiváis warned, "una 'apertura democrática' que sólo se libra por escrito, se reduce finalmente a una amplificación de las licencias literarias". Like Fuentes, Monsiváis acknowledged Echeverría's democratic words but, whereas Fuentes saw an opportunity for popular expression, Monsiváis perceived empty rhetoric. Monsiváis wanted proof that those in power genuinely desired change. As far as he was concerned, "vivimos tan sólo en la

dependencia y en la falta de libertad".⁸⁸ Monsiváis had reason to doubt politicians' words: he had been analysing them for years.⁸⁹

As discussed in chapter two, Mexican writers worked to ensure that the tragedy of Tlatelolco would neither be repeated nor forgotten. Three of the books already mentioned are Paz's *Posdata*, Fuentes's *Tiempo mexicano*, and Poniatowska's *La noche de Tlatelolco*. The different receptions of these works illustrate the changed attitude of the Mexican government under successive presidents. Díaz Ordaz had taken a hard line against any form of criticism, whereas Echeverría sought to create the impression of being liberal-minded. *Posdata* was denounced on Mexican television by President Díaz Ordaz;⁹⁰ yet, as discussed above, President Echeverría awarded the Premio Mazatlán for *Tiempo mexicano*. He also nominated *La Noche de Tlatelolco* for the Xavier Villaurrutia Prize for Literature.⁹¹

Why did Echeverría respond in such a conspicuous way? José Emilio Pacheco pointed out that *La Noche de Tlatelolco* demanded a full government investigation into the crimes committed on 2 October 1968 and called for the punishment of those responsible. Until this happened, he added, "será una ficción hablar de auténtica democracia en México".⁹² As Secretary for Internal Affairs, Echeverría was deemed by many to be jointly responsible for the student massacre in 1968; furthermore 10 June 1971 remained a thorn in the president's side. By publicly praising Poniatowska's book, Echeverría perhaps hoped to distance himself from personal involvement at Tlatelolco and by inference from Jueves de Corpus. There would be no investigation into either episode, but Echeverría could both defuse tension and sustain an "open and flexible" image by rewarding Poniatowska. In the name of "authentic democracy"

Echeverría could appear to be sympathetic towards the families of the victims at Tlatelolco without having to rectify the situation nor disciplining those who committed the atrocities.

Yet Poniatowska, like Fuentes, would not be coopted. She refused the award in an open letter to Echeverría. A heavily edited version was printed in *Excélsior*:⁹³

La Noche de Tlatelolco pertenece a todos los muchachos que dieron su testimonio. [...] Aún no se ha establecido el número de muertos que hubo en Tlatelolco ni se conocen sus nombres y los jóvenes que sobrevivieron a la matanza jamás volverán a ser los mismos.

Encarcelar estudiantes entre los 20 y los 30 años, privarlos de días de libertad absolutamente irrecuperables [...] no es menos criminal que la matanza de Tlatelolco. Tendría yo que interrogar a Gilberto Guevara Niebla, a Margarita Nolasco, [...] a Eduardo de la Vega para saber qué piensan ellos cuatro años después de Tlatelolco.

El premio es de ellos, no mío; el ejemplo es de los que siguen viviendo y de los que no murieron. Yo me pregunto: Cómo se premia a los muertos.⁹⁴

The strength of these remarks cannot be underestimated. Poniatowska directly confronted a serving president. She judged that the failure to release the political prisoners was as contemptible as the killing at Tlatelolco and reminded Echeverría that the facts of the Tlatelolco massacre were still unknown. If a prize were to be awarded, the recipients should be the victims and those who gave their testimonies. Poniatowska made it clear that the true authors of *La noche de Tlatelolco* were the voices through which the story was told.

Yet Poniatowska was reticent to write about Jueves de Corpus. In 1980 she explained that she had been approached to write a book, but “no quise hacerlo. Hubiera sido una oportunista.”⁹⁵ It was not until six years later that Poniatowska voiced her

views.⁹⁶ Like Monsiváis, Poniatowska linked the event to the Tlatelolco massacre. She noted that while Díaz Ordaz assumed responsibility for the events of 2 October 1968, Echeverría blamed outside forces for the killing of 10 June. Echeverría may have promised a full investigation, “pero no por eso hubo mayor claridad respecto a los muertos que en Tlatelolco. Primero fueron cuatro, después once, después siete cadáveres.” She stressed that the mystery surrounding the episode was never solved, nothing was clarified and no-one was punished.⁹⁷

Fuentes remained loyal to Echeverría. In 1975 he accepted the post as Ambassador to France. Such a position was undoubtedly ideal for the cosmopolitan diplomat's son; it also took him far from Mexican soil. Was Echeverría rewarding his “compadre” for services rendered, or was it a ploy to move Fuentes to a place from which intervention in presidential affairs would be more difficult? Echeverría had put some of Fuentes's recommendations into practice, but Fuentes's frank observations may have been making him increasingly uncomfortable. Whatever Echeverría's motives, the move brought Fuentes little praise from his peers.⁹⁸

In August 1975 Monsiváis again examined Echeverría's presidency, describing the democratic opening “como emboscada que provocó la vuelta al redil”. He qualified his simile: the “opening” corresponded to “una necesidad dual del Estado y de aquellos intelectuales que habían disentido de un régimen sexenal no de un sistema”.⁹⁹ Monsiváis could have been referring to Fuentes who, in 1968, had been quick to underline the difference between criticising Caesar and condemning Rome.¹⁰⁰ Monsiváis was, perhaps, identifying a distinction between figures who had been opposed to Díaz Ordaz (including Paz and Fuentes) and those such as himself who were

against the political system. Without being confrontational, Monsiváis added that the Mexican State traditionally sponsored the cultural sector, and it was difficult to obtain success outside the system.¹⁰¹ Poniatowska illustrated the extent of intellectual cooperation with the State:

Los intelectuales siempre han estado con el régimen. Lo han estado incluso los que en la actualidad consideramos disidentes. Es difícil que un mexicano destacado no haya trabajado en algún momento de su vida para el Gobierno: Cosío Villegas lo hizo en servicio exterior, Octavio Paz también, [...] Monsiváis no ha podido evitar una asomadita así de pasadita, a Los Pinos, Heberto Castillo acudió a un desayuno en Antropología a los Premios Nacionales incluso después de la paliza, José Revueltas vive ahora con los \$5,000 mensuales que le da Cinematografía por su trabajo en el cine.¹⁰²

As stated in chapter one, Poniatowska considered herself to be a special case because she is not Mexican by birth. However, although she refused the Villaurrutia Prize for *La noche de Tlatelolco*, within days she had accepted the award for *Hasta no verte Jesús mío*.¹⁰³ In the mid-1970s most writers were, to a greater or lesser extent, connected to the government.¹⁰⁴ It would take a direct blow against their means of critical expression to force writers into breaking ties with Echeverría.

6 July 1976: The *Excelsior* Coup

La libertad de la prensa constituye una garantía social, no una prebenda para grupos oligárquicos. Luis Echeverría, 7 June 1975.¹⁰⁵

Links with the press were nominally good during Echeverría's sexenio. In 1974 Echeverría spoke of the "buen entendimiento que existe entre el poder público y la prensa". The following year he seemed actively to encourage critical comment, claiming, "si a lo largo del presente régimen ha habido alguna restricción a la libertad de

prensa, ésta no ha provenido del gobierno de la República, sino de quienes teniendo el derecho de ejercerla no lo hacen, por las limitaciones que derivan de diversos compromisos".¹⁰⁶ Echeverría indicated an awareness of journalists' tendency towards self-censorship identified by Poniatowska.¹⁰⁷ He denied any part in this practice, neglecting to mention the history of withdrawal of government advertising that had consistently proved to be an effective measure of control.¹⁰⁸ Instead, the president placed responsibility for what appeared in the newspapers firmly upon the shoulders of the press.

In 1975, Echeverría's relationship with the student community again faltered; this time it would lead to a complete break between Echeverría and much of the intellectual community. Amid growing resistance to Echeverría and criticism of his policies, on 14 March 1975, Echeverría visited UNAM; stones were thrown at him by students who were frustrated by unfulfilled promises of financial assistance.¹⁰⁹ The incident was given widespread coverage by *Excélsior*; photographs revealed that the president suffered head-wounds. Comments voiced in the paper were generally supportive of Echeverría; editorials described the protesters in derogatory language. One article claimed the president had been lynched.¹¹⁰ Shortly afterwards UNAM, unions and businesses bestowed praise upon Echeverría for having chosen dialogue instead of retaliation.¹¹¹ Kenneth Johnson nonetheless marked the incident as the beginning of a change of relationship between Echeverría and *Excélsior*: the coverage given to his injuries caused Echeverría much personal and political embarrassment. Although *Excélsior* wrote in favour of the president, the paper also offended him by publishing a denouncement of Echeverría by radical students.¹¹² Echeverría promised much, but it seemed that little had changed.

In early 1976, Poniatowska described *Excélsior* as "lo más liberal de los periódicos mexicanos [...] una oposición autorizada o por lo menos tolerada por el Gobierno".¹¹³ *Excélsior* editorials became increasingly critical of Echeverría as it became apparent that although he outwardly sought the views of others, the president demanded praise, not criticism:

Si mal no se recuerda, una de las aspiraciones iniciales del Presidente Echeverría era precisamente su esperanza en el fortalecimiento de la oposición, como parte indispensable en el juego de fuerzas que debe caracterizar a toda sociedad que aspire a ser democrática. Es evidente que no se ha conseguido.¹¹⁴

The days of such liberality were numbered, moves to undermine *Excélsior*'s editor, Julio Scherer, were already taking place. In June 1976, campesinos staged a sit-in on former *ejido* land that had been purchased by the *Excélsior* cooperative; additional compensation was demanded for the loss of their land. Krauze claimed that the government ordered the occupation and noted that the campesinos dispersed once *Excélsior*'s leadership changed. Meanwhile, pro-Echeverría journalist Regino Díaz Redondo fostered opposition to Scherer within the paper. Tensions culminated on 8 July during a meeting at which office workers called for Scherer to resign. Krauze explained that as *Excélsior* was a cooperative Scherer could be voted out by the workers. This was achieved by fear, "paid hoodlums arrived on the premises and shouted down any attempt by Scherer to address the assembly".¹¹⁵ Poniatowska was certain that the crowd was manipulated: "En *Excélsior*, manos extrañas a sus talleres y a su administración quisieron hacer a estos hombres víctimas de una lucha de clases."¹¹⁶ Class divisions were stirred up and workers induced to oppose Scherer. Scherer never doubted who was behind the coup: "President Echeverría nos expulsó de nuestra casa.

Combinó, como es usual, la fuerza, el sometimiento y una gran recompensa."¹¹⁷ Paz agreed with Scherer; as a measure of solidarity he and his staff resigned from *Plural*.¹¹⁸

Excélsior continued to operate with Díaz Redondo as editor. On 9 July, the new management outlined its stance: "Estamos decididos a preservar independencia." The paper would continue as before: "informar con veracidad e independencia al pueblo de México".¹¹⁹ Since then it has consistently supported government policy. Poniatowska described *Excélsior* of 9 July 1976 as "un panteón, una tumba fría, convencional y aterradora".¹²⁰ Johnson viewed the change of management as "one of the most fateful decisions of Echeverría's career", claiming that Scherer's *Excélsior* had been "the last bastion of intellectual and press freedom in Mexico".¹²¹

Jean Franco noted that if Echeverría intended to silence the critical press by his stance against *Excélsior*, he failed.¹²² In November 1976 Scherer launched the political magazine, *Proceso*; he soon became the target of government warnings: "With the publication of this weekly, you [...] assume a frontal posture against President Echeverría. The government cannot permit this. [...] The security of the state depends upon the public credibility of the president of the republic. To attack the president is to attack the state."¹²³ The government-controlled distributor of newsprint, PIPSA, refused to supply paper to *Proceso*, forcing Scherer to buy imported material at a much higher cost. Scherer survived the government offensive, but only because he personally underwrote the publication costs. José Pagés Llergo, editor of *Siempre!*, made office space available for *Proceso* until Scherer could afford his own premises.¹²⁴ Echeverría nonetheless, retained an upper hand: he censored reports of the *Excélsior* affair within Mexico and warned Scherer not to attend a conference discussing the matter in New

York. Scherer stayed away for fear of reprisals.¹²⁵ It was not until 1978, after Echeverría had left office, that Vicente Leñero described the episode in full in his "novel", *Los periodistas*.¹²⁶

There proved to be more at stake than government interference in the publication of a newspaper. Paz explained that, after resigning, the *Plural* team endeavoured to endorse a declaration of support for Scherer jointly with the *Excelsior* staff. He claimed that although his signature was welcomed those of his colleagues were not. *Plural* thus issued a separate protest and a division within the ex-*Excelsior* group emerged. The two factions stayed apart in the aftermath: describing the origins of *Proceso*, Miguel Angel Granados Chapa overlooked the part played by the *Plural* team.¹²⁷ Yet although clearly upset that *Plural* had been disregarded at the time of the crisis, Paz did not seek to weaken the *Excelsior* cause. It was not until five years later that he mentioned the rift and expressed his annoyance with Granados Chapa.¹²⁸ The incident caused further ripples on the fifteenth anniversary of *Vuelta* when Leñero voiced disappointment that Paz neither mentioned the *Excelsior* Coup nor Scherer when depicting the circumstances of the birth of *Vuelta*.¹²⁹ Revealing that rancour remained, in an open letter to Scherer, Krauze explained that he had suppressed an impulse to list the negative aspects of *Proceso* to avoid a polemic.¹³⁰

Echeverría denied any involvement in the *Excelsior* Coup:¹³¹ there had been "irrestricida libertad del prensa" during his term of office.¹³² On 1 September 1976 he claimed he had opened "nuevas alternativas a la libertad de los mexicanos". Carlos Marín pointed out that the president made particular reference to cinema, radio and television, but neglected to mention the press.¹³³ In November 1976, Castillo analysed

Echeverría's record and found that, besides the *Excélsior* Coup, the critical journal, *¿Por qué?*, ceased publication; its editors were detained in prison before being released without charge. *Eros* magazine had lost its licence following reports of "malas palabras" by its writers, among them José Revueltas.¹³⁴ Despite Echeverría's words, control of what appeared in the press had been strictly regulated.

Although condemnation of the *Excélsior* Coup was widespread, Fuentes remained silent. If Echeverría had intended to curb Fuentes's interference in affairs at home by sending him to France, he appeared to have been successful. Krauze maintained "everyone knew the details of the president's support of the coup. Everyone except Carlos Fuentes, who defended Echeverría publicly." He added that Fuentes's "idolatry of the State and the Revolution" made him incapable of objectivity.¹³⁵ Certainly when Fuentes appraised Echeverría's presidency in 1978, he neither mentioned *Excélsior* nor did he discuss *Jueves de Corpus* in detail.¹³⁶

In 1980 Fuentes stated that although he accepted Echeverría had not created democracy in Mexico, it had been "perfectly natural" for him to collaborate with his administration.¹³⁷ He did so in keeping with his notion that, as the holder of absolute power, the president alone could instigate change: Fuentes could only hope to influence Echeverría by cooperating with him. Fuentes continued to maintain that Echeverría was not to blame for Tlatelolco. In 1993, he reiterated, "el único responsable de Tlatelolco es Gustavo Díaz Ordaz, no hay otro responsable. [...] Es el único que tenía las facultades constitucionales para ordenar que sucediera lo que sucedió." If the president had all-encompassing powers, surely Fuentes held Echeverría accountable for *Jueves de Corpus*? When asked about the incident in 1993, Fuentes answered that the *halcones*

were a legacy from Díaz Ordaz.¹³⁸ The issue of why, as supreme holder of power, Echeverría did not disband them did not arise.

Fuentes's views aside, the *Excelsior* Coup achieved that which 10 June did not. From then onwards, most intellectuals opposed Echeverría. It proved that Echeverría was intolerant and inflexible, "criticism" would only be accepted if it was in praise of the president and his policies.

The legacy of Echeverría: The consolidation of intellectuals?

In the hope, perhaps, of indirectly extending his tenure as president, Echeverría selected his close friend, José López Portillo, as his successor. Fuentes stressed the need to support the new president,

porque confiamos en que hará irreversible lo logrado y lo llevará adelante con audacia y patriotismo. No lo abandonaremos en su esfuerzo por dar respuesta a los desafíos que propone el México que queremos, pues si fracasa, fracasamos todos, y si fracasa México, nuestro pueblo conocerá años amargos de hambre, violencia, represión e intervención extranjera.¹³⁹

Fuentes believed that Echeverría's efforts could be brought to fruition if López Portillo continued his policies. The alternative was anarchy; Fuentes still felt that change could only be achieved by working within the system.

López Portillo sustained Echeverría's attempts to coopt intellectuals.¹⁴⁰ He, too, boasted an impressive intellectual contingent in his administration.¹⁴¹ Such representation gave intellectuals "the confident belief they were being influential".¹⁴² López Portillo saw the need to keep intellectuals on his side, rather than work against

him. Like his predecessor's, López Portillo's foreign policy earned him considerable praise from the intellectual Left. Close ties with Cuba were maintained; Mexico refused to support the US call to boycott the Moscow Olympic Games; and rebel forces in El Salvador were recognised as a legitimate political force.¹⁴³ Mexico also took a stand against US intervention in Nicaragua by approving a \$200 million aid package to impede attempts to ostracise the Sandinista government.¹⁴⁴

Relations at home were more problematic. On 12 April 1977, López Portillo named ex-President Díaz Ordaz as Ambassador to Spain. Why he did so was subject to much speculation: Castillo sustained it was a move to distract the attention of revolutionary elements within the universities; by focusing on Díaz Ordaz, such forces would be diverted from their current strategy of organising the poor. Whatever the reason, Castillo added, the appointment heralded a return to the repressive days of Díaz Ordaz's presidency.¹⁴⁵ López Portillo did little to allay such fears: "[A Díaz Ordaz] le tocó defender las instituciones y salvar el orden"; thus he argued, Díaz Ordaz would make a good ambassador. He confidently proclaimed that an examination into the events of 1968 would exonerate Díaz Ordaz: "Que si fue para salvar al país; que si todo se manejó desde el extranjero; que si era necesario sacrificar a unos pocos para evitar la muerte de millares."¹⁴⁶ López Portillo had apparently made his judgement in advance of any inquiry. Furthermore, his argument was that used by Díaz Ordaz in his self-defence. López Portillo was not alone in this assessment: approval came from the Mexican Senate; Fidel Velázquez Sánchez, Secretary of the Confederación de Trabajadores de México (CTM); and, significantly, Sócrates Amado Campos Lemus, the former student leader accused of betraying the Student Movement.¹⁴⁷

Most Mexicans, however, were stunned by the nomination. Fuentes “broke violently” from López Portillo and immediately resigned as Ambassador to France.¹⁴⁸ Like Paz, Fuentes has never again held a government post. Poniatowska praised Fuentes who, as had Paz in 1968, provided “la única voz oficial que rompió la unidad del coro”. While applauding Fuentes’s decision, Poniatowska added, “en lo que se equivocó es en insistir en que Luis Echeverría nada tuvo que ver en los sucesos del 68”. The latter was simply not sustainable, Poniatowska reasoned: had Echeverría been opposed to Díaz Ordaz he would not have remained his successor.¹⁴⁹

Others were less generous in their interpretation of Fuentes’s stance. An anonymous article in *Proceso* drew attention to a rift between Fuentes and the Secretary of Foreign Affairs, Santiago Roel, suggesting that Fuentes resigned in anticipation of being dismissed.¹⁵⁰ Gastón García Cantú stated that Fuentes’s action could not be compared to that of Paz in 1968: “Hay renunciias y renunciias. Se puede lanzar como un guante de protesta o hacerla, también, excusa.”¹⁵¹ Clearly García Cantú believed the rumours about Fuentes. He recalled Fuentes’s praise of Echeverría and his “defensa estricta” of the system. Accusing Fuentes of having experienced a “cambio de piel”, García Cantú claimed that Fuentes should never have become ambassador. He noted that Fuentes had failed to support those who were obliged to leave *Excelsior* in 1976. Here, perhaps, was the key to García Cantú’s argument. Even though Fuentes’s resignation was a decisive, ethical move, he would receive little praise for it from those who could not forgive his silence after the *Excelsior* Coup.

Fuentes replied that the rumour of a rift with his “viejo y respetado amigo”, Roel, was “calumnioso” and “una inexactitud flagrante”,¹⁵² stating that abdicating his

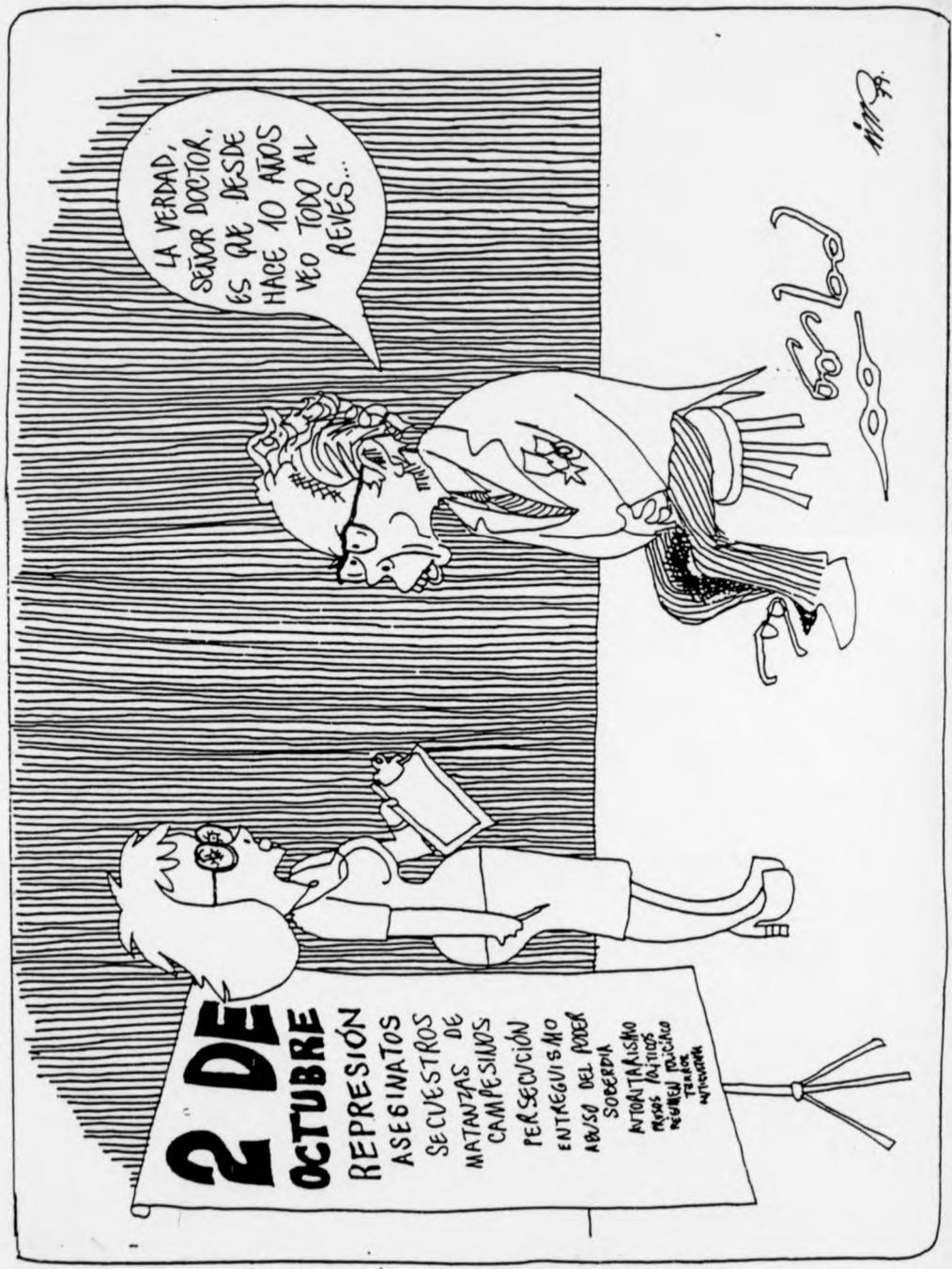
post had been a logical step: "I was only two years in the diplomatic service. When things changed, I resigned."¹⁵³ It must have been a painful decision: when Paz resigned in 1968, Roberto Blanco Moheno observed that India was not a prestigious post, it would have been a much greater test of Paz's conscience had he been Ambassador to France.¹⁵⁴ Fuentes adequately answered Blanco Moheno's charge. In his resignation letter, Fuentes reiterated that Díaz Ordaz "fue la única responsable" for the killing at Tlatelolco. For this reason, "me resulta imposible, hoy, pertenecer al mismo cuerpo de representantes. Cada quien escoge a quién le da la mano y con quién se sienta a comer. Es este derecho elemental el que ahora reivindico." Fuentes adhered to his previously stated beliefs: Echeverría was not to blame for the massacre, therefore Fuentes could work alongside him to achieve democratic change and would extend such support to Echeverría's chosen successor. Díaz Ordaz was a different case: Fuentes could not be part of any regime that included him. Fuentes's letter was published in the French newspaper, *Le Monde*. It was pointed out that Mexicans were denied the opportunity of reading it for themselves because copies of the paper were prohibited from entering Mexico; an explanation was demanded.¹⁵⁵ The censorship that had been so effective in the past evidently still prevailed. Alejandro Avilés stated that although many people viewed Echeverría to be partly responsible for Tlatelolco, "tal incongruencia no invalida su [Fuentes] testimonio de hoy".¹⁵⁶

Poniatowska was incensed that Díaz Ordaz had been given a government post. Again, in defence of the Student Movement she strongly condemned a serving president. She called upon the thousands of Mexicans who had suffered as a result of the events of 2 October 1968 to step forward: "López Portillo premia al verdugo, ninguno ha vengado a las víctimas. Públicamente, Díaz Ordaz el 12 de abril 1977 se

burla de las víctimas y de sus familiares. ¿Dónde están? ¿Por qué no se reclaman?"¹⁵⁷

Far from her more passive role as a reporter, Poniatowska used her prestige as an intellectual to lead and direct public outrage against López Portillo's choice. Her passionate plea to all those affected by the Tlatelolco massacre to voice their anger was not unheeded: a protest letter attracted over 700 signatures;¹⁵⁸ on 26 April approximately 10,000 people marched through the streets of Mexico City. They were led by many former students of 1968; Poniatowska was among them.¹⁵⁹

Little coverage was given to the demonstration in the Mexican press; Poniatowska voiced concern at this "fenómeno inquietante". Furthermore, she claimed there had been "unanimidad elogiosa" in the media about Díaz Ordaz's appointment, and editorials disagreed with the numerous letters of protest. In contrast in her book, *Fuerte es el silencio*, Poniatowska described the rally with pride, repeating the chants and recreating the atmosphere that remained jovial despite the circumstances: Díaz Ordaz was ridiculed rather than threatened. Nonetheless, a strong message was sent to the Mexican government: "¡Aplaudan-aplauden-no dejen de aplaudir/ que-el-pinche-gobierno-se-tiene-que-morir!" Poniatowska heavily criticised López Portillo for nominating Díaz Ordaz. Interestingly neither the description of the march nor Poniatowska's derogatory remarks about López Portillo appeared in the version of this article that was published in *Vuelta* at the time, although her remarks about the press remained.¹⁶⁰ Had Paz persuaded her to remove references to the demonstration? Did Poniatowska exclude them to save Paz from having to exercise censorship? Or was her description of the march made retrospectively? The latter seems unlikely; she had attended the rally and made a vivid report. It would appear that it was easier to voice criticism in a book than in the press but, in so doing, Poniatowska, whether willingly or



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REPRESIÓN
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MATANZAS DE
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PERSECUCIÓN
ENTREGUISMO
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SOBERBIA
ANTOATRAMISMO
PRESOS POLITICOS
RENTEN POLICIAL
AUTOCENSURA

LA VERDAD,
SEÑOR DOCTOR,
ES QUE DESDE
HACE 10 AÑOS
VEO TODO AL
REVÉS...

MPA

not, became party to the “fenómeno inquietante” of silence in the press. If the government’s intention was to ensure that Díaz Ordaz kept his post, it failed. Within two weeks of taking up his appointment, Díaz Ordaz was forced to resign for “health reasons”: a detached retina made it impossible for him to fulfil his duties. The explanation yielded a wealth of speculation and comments about the quality of Díaz Ordaz’s vision and that of those who had appointed him. Cartoonist Rius depicted Díaz Ordaz having his eyes tested.¹⁶¹

To defuse tension, on 14 April 1977 López Portillo announced an electoral reform in which opposition candidates could occupy twenty-five per cent of the seats in Congress.¹⁶² Castillo reservedly welcomed the plans:

Con el anuncio de la reforma política se crean expectativas y se reverdecen ilusiones. Pero estamos alerta. El gobierno busca conservar el control que ahora tiene sobre los trabajadores a través de las centrales obreras, campesinos populares. Y mediante el PRI.

While not averse to the law, Castillo stated that the measures were insufficient, a true transformation could only be achieved if all political parties were allowed to register: “sin excepción”. Castillo warned, “de no tomarse estas medidas, pronto habrá nuevas explosiones de malestar. Como la del 68. O más graves.”¹⁶³ The power of the former student leader’s words was increased by the current mass-demonstrations against Díaz Ordaz in Mexico City. Significantly, the Mexican Communist Party was subsequently recognised by López Portillo. In 1979 it participated in elections for the first time since 1948.¹⁶⁴ Roderic Camp was sceptical about the reforms, claiming they were a ruse to “strengthen the PRI’s image and that of the political system”. The opposition was apparently strengthened, but there was no possibility of a victory; any gains would be

countered by fraud.¹⁶⁵ The reforms, the work of Jesús Reyes Heróles, were in any case short-lived and "lost their impetus" when he left his post in 1979.¹⁶⁶

As the tenth anniversary of the Student Movement approached, commemorations to mark the massacre were planned. Castillo explained that it was not a time for sorrow, but an opportunity to look forward: "El dos de octubre [...] es el día del año que nos recuerda, a quienes participamos en ese Movimiento, que la revolución exige nuestro esfuerzo, nuestra entrega."¹⁶⁷ On 2 October 1978 Poniatowska stood in the Plaza de las Tres Culturas alongside the survivors of the movement:

Cuando veo a González de Alba, a Alvarez Garín, a Guevara Niebla, al Pino, al Bujo pienso que detrás de ellos caminan cientos de miles de manifestantes, los que protestaron, los que se la jugaron; sé que ellos eran distintos antes del 68; sé que aquel año escindió su vida como escindió la de muchos mexicanos.

As she praised the student leaders, Poniatowska revealed her continued contact with them. Such people, she explained, had been destined to become the future leaders of Mexico but rather than be coopted, they had retained their principles. She noted that many of the former students were involved in opposition parties: "Su afán revolucionario no se ha gastado; ha crecido."¹⁶⁸ Poniatowska applauded them for continuing the struggle, and commemorated the dead and those whose lives were irredeemably altered by the massacre: some had committed suicide, others were mentally scarred, and many were living in exile. Characteristically, Poniatowska provided names and included personal histories where appropriate.

The fate of the man accused of betraying the Student Movement warrants particular mention. Campos Lemus had been included in President Echeverría's

initiative to integrate students into the government, and had worked as an agrarian consultant in Hidalgo, Oaxaca and Veracruz. In 1977, Poniadowska stated that Campos Lemus had been nominated as a candidate for Secretary of Government. Eleven years later, he was appointed manager of a coffee producers' association with 47,000 members in an area covering six States.¹⁶⁹

Like Poniadowska, Monsiváis was among those at Tlatelolco on 2 October 1978. He recalled the government's attitude in 1968: "Reprimir es gobernar. Gobernar es explicar serena y patriarcalmente la represión." Interestingly, Monsiváis did not mention the former Secretary for Internal Affairs, Echeverría. It appeared that for Monsiváis there was one main villain in 1968: the "chauvinistic stone", Díaz Ordaz. Monsiváis re-examined the "conspiracy theory", concluding that it was a figment of Díaz Ordaz's limited imagination. Monsiváis stressed that such notions conformed to the idea of supreme presidential power: Díaz Ordaz could not concede that the students had any cause to protest; hence they must have been controlled by others:

Alguien acecha en la oscuridad (ergo, yo soy la luz) y me ataca por envidia (ergo, soy envidable). [...] Para la ilusión del poder absoluto toda oposición personaliza amargas y frustraciones. [...] Desde otra perspectiva, más real pero no más entrañable, el Presidente [...] no puede conceder demanda alguna.¹⁷⁰

Monsiváis subtly moved from a discussion of Díaz Ordaz to a condemnation of "the president". This unnamed president could be any one of many; not least López Portillo who had recently sought to include Díaz Ordaz in his government. To emphasise his point, perhaps, Monsiváis used the present tense.

The fear produced by the massacre, Monsiváis added, fostered a sense that the Student Movement had been in vain. After 2 October 1968 he recalled an atmosphere of confusion, desperation, frustration and resignation: emotions that could be equally applied to himself during that period. Rather than dwell upon that difficult time, however, Monsiváis took a long-term view:

A diez años de distancia, [...] 1968 es un episodio de *lucha democrática*, de creencia entusiasta o dolorosa en los derechos civiles. Véase el pliego petitorio del Consejo Nacional de Huelga y se hallará su común denominador: el enfrentamiento a la injusticia, que oficialmente se reconozca que el gobierno a veces no sabe gobernar.¹⁷¹

Although commenting on the past, Monsiváis implied there remained much to be done.

He stressed that the aims of the Student Movement were still relevant:

Con sus fallas, carencias, contradicciones, limitaciones ideológicas y actitudes irresolubles, el Movimiento Estudiantil de 1968 es una hazaña del México contemporáneo, recapitulación y nuevo punto de partida de los grandes luchas de las mayorías y de los derechos, conjuntos y separados, de mayorías y minorías.¹⁷²

Like Castillo, Monsiváis used the tenth anniversary to call for the struggle to continue. The basic demands of the CNH, guaranteed by the Mexican Constitution, had not been met. Monsiváis's message was that contemporary dissident forces should join together and follow the students. Although Monsiváis was not one of the leaders, as in 1968, he was using his intellectual prestige to rally his readers' support, harnessing their sympathy for the students of 1968 to current opposition groups.

Monsiváis examined the different perceptions of the Student Movement, by "interviewing" different members of the public. Among his subjects were a *brigadista*, a politician, a mother, and a writer. No names were provided, nor is it clear if

Monsiváis's case studies were types or the views of specific individuals.¹⁷³ The *brigadista* called upon the people to join demonstrations, and denounced the politicians' use of repression. The politician insisted that the students were being manipulated, either by the CIA or the Communist Party; their action only played into the hands of US interests. Monsiváis's "mother of a family" (a phrase often used to describe Poniatowska's informants) claimed not to understand what was happening; explaining that her quiet, pacifist son had been caught painting slogans on a wall. He was detained by police and then shot dead. Her reaction was one of anger: "Yo soy, también muy pacífica pero por primera vez en la vida grité y les menté la madre."¹⁷⁴ Monsiváis used this example to depict how ordinary, non-politicised citizens had become caught up in the dissent. Monsiváis's *brigadista* was "interviewed" again in 1978. He rationalised that in 1968 he had acted from conviction, although he had not been fully aware of the implications of his response. Ten years later, he understood more about the nature of Mexican politics, and was proud to have been a part of the movement. Again, in a move to integrate past government repression with the current situation, Monsiváis's *brigadista* called for more participation in political decisions.

Monsiváis's "writer" was, likewise, anonymous. He drew links with the repression of 1958 that arose following the railway workers' strike. The "writer" quoted a letter he was about to send to the "jefe de las azules fuerzas represivas". There followed a direct citation from a statement sent by the late José Revueltas to Díaz Ordaz soon after 2 October 1968. In it Revueltas confessed to playing an active role in the Student Movement. Revueltas was aware that such a "guilty" conduct was sufficient to condemn him to death; hence, he demanded a last request: "Mi postrer deseo, distinguido señor, es que vaya usted y chingue a su madre."¹⁷⁵

Their accounts of the meeting at Tlatelolco on 2 October 1978 reveal Monsiváis's and Poniatowska's different styles. Both were as fully sympathetic to the student cause as they had been in 1968. Yet while Poniatowska used the occasion to update her readers on the lives of the people behind the movement, Monsiváis examined the present Mexican political system emphasising that the problems remained. The two had different agendas: Poniatowska was acting out of continued indignation, whereas Monsiváis was pushing for further political change. Those responsible for the massacre, Monsiváis stressed, remain at liberty. For those who took part in the commemorations, "el Estado ya no es el padre tiránico y omnipresente, sino un fenómeno de clase que aun hipocresía, represiones, desastres financieros, incompetencia y demagogia". Monsiváis emphasised the lack of progress in ten years: a tyrant may have gone, but corruption remained. He wryly looked at the nature of López Portillo's proposed reforms:

La palabra "chingada" se oye suave y cariñosa y la voz "reformista" es de tal modo áspera que el jefe de familia le exige explicaciones a quien ofendió a su hija: "¿Qué educación le dieron que dice esas palabrotas delante de una señorita?" **Me acusó de reformista y eso no se lo permito ni a mi padre.** [...] "Ni reforma ni registro, queremos revolución."¹⁷⁶

López Portillo may have spoken of political change, but without democracy it was empty rhetoric. Monsiváis indicated that such language was offensive.

Monsiváis described the two separate minute's silences held: the first at 6.10 p.m. when the flares above the Plaza de las Tres Culturas had appeared that signalled the start of the shooting; the second, one of contemplation for the victims. As in the march of 13 September 1968, silence proved to be stronger than words. Monsiváis depicted the scene as "una de las grandes imágenes del México contemporáneo". There

was sorrow for what happened, but also hope. Monsiváis closed his report by linking the past, present and future: the crowd was, "llena de reconocimiento para quienes, hace una década, crearon con su obsesión democrática un primer impulso que hoy se vuelve continuidad histórica".¹⁷⁷ The dream of democratic change may have faded on 2 October 1968, but its legacy had survived and would flourish.

The theme of tenuous optimism was continued by Monsiváis. He stressed that marches had not been held in previous years only because the police and *granaderos* refused access to Tlatelolco. The 1978 demonstration took place as planned due to popular demand and despite a huge official presence. Monsiváis perceived gradual and partial political change in Mexico: "La Apertura Democrática en el sexenio pasado y la Reforma Política en éste [...] son resultados no del sentimiento de culpa sino de los requerimientos del proceso administrativo y político."¹⁷⁸ Monsiváis emphasised that most of the CNH leaders who survived the massacre had formed an increasingly effective opposition; some of their former teachers joined them, and many younger people were rallying to the cause.

Some conclusions

When Fuentes returned to Mexico in 1969, he noted that the words of intellectuals such as Guzmán and Novo served the politicians while those of Paz, Monsiváis and Benítez influenced the young.¹⁷⁹ Fuentes strove to make his work unite the division between those with political power and the young protesters who wanted to change the system. As Díaz Ordaz's successor, Fuentes believed that Echeverría had two options: democracy or repression.¹⁸⁰ In his pre-election rhetoric, Echeverría indicated a

preference for the former. As president, Echeverría repeated some of Paz's and Fuentes's proposals; giving Fuentes the impression that he held some sway over Echeverría, hence he could best serve his own interests and those of Mexico by remaining close to the president. Whether or not Echeverría was sincere, he was a welcome break from the recent past, allowing writers to perceive they could participate in political affairs, a situation of which intellectuals sought to take advantage.

Contrary to the accusations made against him of having changed his skin,¹⁸¹ Fuentes consistently acted according to his stated convictions. He genuinely believed that he could affect change while working within the system. Fuentes felt that he had attained considerable achievements under Echeverría and extended his support to López Portillo, but immediately withdrew from the government when Díaz Ordaz reappeared on the political scene. With hindsight Fuentes concluded, "Presidente Echeverría optó por una llamada 'apertura democrática' que en realidad no era sino la voluntad de restaurar la esencia misma del sistema".¹⁸² Paz, too, was prepared to work alongside Echeverría: returning to Mexico in 1971 he commended Echeverría's attitude; moreover, in 1985 Paz conceded: "la Reforma [de López Portillo] comenzó a dar frutos". For Paz, however, a lack of sound financial policy, the persistence of widespread corruption, and the Mexican tradition of ignoring advice, doomed such projects to disaster.¹⁸³

Was it mere coincidence that Echeverría repeated some of Paz's and Fuentes's proposed democratic reforms? Perhaps, but it gave both writers the impression that they were achieving their political goals. Whatever his motives or hidden agenda, as far as some intellectuals were concerned, Echeverría offered far more opportunities for critical

comment than his predecessor; at least until July 1976. Where Paz differed from Fuentes was that he could neither forget the lack of an investigation into Jueves de Corpus, nor forgive Echeverría's role in the *Excelsior* affair. Paz distanced himself from Echeverría, but did not completely break ties, noting that after the *Excelsior* Coup Echeverría remained amicable towards him. He concluded that pride had been the president's downfall.¹⁸⁴ While their individual relationships with Echeverría may not have immediately caused a dispute between them, Fuentes's failure to criticise Echeverría or outwardly to support those who left *Excelsior* in 1976 placed an obstacle in the friendship of Paz and Fuentes that could not be removed.

Neither Monsiváis nor Poniatowska could disregard Echeverría's involvement in the Tlatelolco massacre. Poniatowska stated that both Echeverría and López Portillo tried to dissociate themselves from the killing, "como si el gobierno no hubiera sido el culpable".¹⁸⁵ This simply could not be sustained: the Mexican government had been stained by the blood of its people. Tlatelolco refused to fade away. The tenth anniversary brought a tide of repercussions and recriminations; subsequent milestones would produce yet more critical comment. In the words of Monsiváis, 1968 was just one episode in an ongoing and far-reaching process of democratic struggle. Whatever their political position, the four writers all agreed that Mexican society had united following the 1968 massacre, and that changes had occurred as a result. It would take another disaster, this time of natural causes, to consolidate this integration and force citizens of Mexico City to demand democratic justice.

Notes to chapter three

¹ Meyer and Sherman, *The Course of Mexican History*, pp.671-672.

² John King, *Magical Reels: A History of Cinema in Latin America*, (London, 1990), p.136.

³ [N.A.], "Texto integro del Informe Presidencial", *Excelsior*, No.19173, 2 Sept. 1969, pp.12, 13, 27-30. Díaz Ordaz did not apologise for his action; rather he suggested that groups opposed to Mexican progress used irrational and undemocratic methods to attack the country. In this use of the "conspiracy theory", Díaz Ordaz added that the majority of Mexicans were against anarchy and in favour of peace. The president thanked the Army for its part in the pursuit of order, and assumed "personal, ética, social, jurídica, política e histórica" responsibility for all the government decisions of the previous year.

⁴ Echeverría incurred Díaz Ordaz's displeasure for this concession.

⁴ Poniatowska, "El movimiento estudiantil", p.24. Poniatowska explained that the minute's silence was at the request of two brothers named Hiraes. Echeverría insisted that the soldiers who died at Tlatelolco should also be remembered. Sergio Hiraes responded, "No señor, aquí somos nosotros los que ponemos las condiciones". Written in 1977, Poniatowska noted that one of the brothers, she did not specify which, was currently in Cuba; the other had "disappeared".

⁵ *Ibid.*, p.23. Poniatowska stated that 20% voted for opposition candidates, spoiled papers accounted for 25%, and 34% abstained. The official figures disputed Poniatowska's data: early returns gave Echeverría 2,695,000 votes with 591,000 against. However, it was noted that in Mexico D.F., the opposition "did best" with 366,000; whereas Echeverría had "so far" gained 286,000. It was reported that students urged the population to boycott the election. The final count was Echeverría: 11,923,755, Efraín González Morfin (Partido de Acción Nacional) 1,945,391. In agreement with Poniatowska's figure, abstentions numbered 36%. See, Ricardo Wigg, "The ruling party voted back in Mexico", *The Times*, No.57911, 7 July 1970, p.4; [N.A.], "Mexico: Victory Not Quite so Overwhelming", *Latin American Political Report*, Vol.IV, 17 July 1970, pp.234, 236.

⁶ Elena Poniatowska, "Hablan los presos", *La Cultura en México*, No.450, 23 Sept. 1970, p.ii. Her figures are as follows: Eli de Gortari, 3.2%; his wife, Artemisa, 5.6%; his daughters Ana, 44.5% and baby Lia, 150.4%.

⁷ *Ibid.*, pp.ii, v.

⁸ Eli de Gortari was free, but hundreds remained incarcerated, among them Heberto Castillo; José Revueltas; Gilberto Guevara Niebla, whom Poniatowska had used as a pretext for entering the prison when preparing her book; and Eduardo de la Vega, who had found it hard to believe that the Army would fire against the students.

⁹ Krauze, *Mexico*, p.743; Poniatowska, "El movimiento estudiantil", p.24; Castañeda, *Utopia Unarmed*, p.191. Krauze claimed that between 1968 and 1978 funding increased by 1688%. Poniatowska pointed out that when students in Baja California asked Echeverría for two university buses, he supplied six. Castañeda maintained that the government spent "billions of dollars [...] coopting the same students it had fired on at the Plaza de las Tres Culturas".

¹⁰ Poniatowska, "El movimiento estudiantil", p.24.

¹¹ Carlos Monsiváis, "Que veinte años ya es algo: Fuérame dado remontar el río de las cuartillas", *La Cultura en México*, No.1042, 19 March 1982, p.iv.

¹² Camp, *Intellectuals and the State*, p.209; Camp, "Intellectuals: Agents of Change?", p.302.

¹³ Camp, *Intellectuals and the State*, p.210; Riding, *Mexico: Inside the Volcano*, pp.61, 360; Luis Echeverría Alvarez, "II Informe de Gobierno", in Luis Echeverría Alvarez, *Praxis Política*, Tomo 12, (México D.F., [n.d.]), p.169. When the Chilean regime fell, Echeverría gave asylum to Salvador Allende's widow, Hortensia Bussi, and to several ministers. Chilean politicians, economists and academics were given posts in Mexico. Exiles from Argentina and Uruguay have also fled to Mexico. At the time it was noted that it is easier to be radical abroad than at home. Echeverría categorically denied that his foreign policy was an attempt to distract attention from internal affairs.

¹⁴ Luis Pazos, "La Cosecha de Chiapas", *El Financiero*, No.3222, 15 Jan. 1994, p.7.

¹⁵ Zermeño, "Intellectuals and the State", pp.279-280.

¹⁶ Enrique Maza, "El respeto sobrevive, declaran los dos: La unidad, aún posible: Cuauhtémoc; candidatura única, ya no: Heberto", *Proceso*, No.586, 25 Jan. 1988, p.20.

¹⁷ Poniatowska, "El movimiento estudiantil", p.24.

¹⁸ Pacheco, "A diez años de *La noche*", p.58.

- ¹⁹ A.P., "Echeverría, 'un Roosevelt mexicano', dice Fuentes", *Excelsior*, No.20019, 12 Jan. 1972, pp.1, 10. Fuentes likened Echeverría to Franklin D. Roosevelt in the 1930s, claiming that both faced similar tasks of rebuilding and restoring their nations.
- ²⁰ Fuentes, "Carta al Director de Novedades", p.vi.
- ²¹ Van Delden, *Carlos Fuentes*, p.120.
- ²² García Flores, "Aclarar los humos", p.iii.
- ²³ Fuentes, *Tiempo mexicano*, p.191.
- ²⁴ Poniatowska, "No es que México", p.v.
- ²⁵ Carlos Fuentes, "Opciones críticas en el verano de nuestro descontento", *Plural*, No.11, Aug. 1972, p.7.
- ²⁶ Fuentes, *Tiempo mexicano*, pp.165-166, 189.
- ²⁷ Fuentes, "Opciones críticas", p.8.
- ²⁸ Luis Echeverría, "Ante Delegados al Primer Congreso Nacional de Profesionales y Técnicos", 7 Aug. 1972, in Echeverría, *Praxis Política*, Vol.12, p.90.
- ²⁹ Echeverría, "II Informe de Gobierno", in *Ibid.*, p.132.
- ³⁰ [N.A.], "Cuba: Revolution and the Intellectual: The Strange Case of Heberto Padilla", *Index on Censorship*, Vol.1, No.2, Summer 1972, p.81. On 20 March 1971, Padilla, who had written poems criticising Castro's government, was jailed without charge. Padilla was released on 25 April after he had repudiated his anti-government comments. Many believed Padilla's confession had been forced, and suspected that he had been either brainwashed or tortured. Paz and Fuentes were among those who co-signed a letter of protest to Castro.
- ³¹ Carlos Fuentes, "La verdadera solidaridad con Cuba", *La Cultura en México*, No.484, 19 May 1971, p.v.
- ³² Revueltas was freed on 13 May 1971. Although Fuentes's article is undated, this section of *La Cultura en México* also included one by Revueltas written on 3 May 1971 from his prison cell. As mentioned in chapter two, the magazine was distributed at least two weeks before its date of issue.
- ³³ Ignacio Solares, "MOYA, estulto censor, guillotina las mejores cabezas", *La Cultura en México*, No.498, 25 Aug. 1971, p.viii.
- ³⁴ Javier Fernández Aguilar, "Fuentes habla con tribuna de censura y miseria en México", *Siempre!*, No.972, 9 Feb. 1972, p.70.
- ³⁵ Fuentes, "Mexico and its Demons", p.20.
- ³⁶ *Ibid.*, p.20.
- ³⁷ *Ibid.*, pp.19-20.
- ³⁸ *Ibid.*, p.20. Fuentes directly faced the allegation made against Echeverría that the president had "more style than substance", and cryptically concluded, "I doubt it" (my emphasis).
- ³⁹ *Ibid.*, p.21.
- ⁴⁰ Scherer, "Salinas, modernización, TLC", p.6.
- ⁴¹ Octavio Paz, "La cultura mexicana ha recobrado su vocación crítica", *La Cultura en México*, No.416, 28 Jan. 1970, p.vii.
- ⁴² Ochoa, "Sí, vengo a quedarme", p.17.
- ⁴³ Zabludovsky, "Echeverría, un hombre que sabe", p.24.
- ⁴⁴ Heberto Castillo, "Reapertura democrática necesaria y una nueva victoria de la juventud", *Siempre!*, No.940, 30 June 1971, p.36.
- ⁴⁵ Colin M. MacLachlan and William H. Beezley, *El Gran Pueblo: A History of Greater Mexico*, (New Jersey, 1994), p.376; Adler Hellman, *Mexico in Crisis*, p.203; Heberto Castillo, [N.T.], *Siempre!*, No.939, 23 June 1971, p.28. MacLachlan and Beezley described how the students had gone on strike in Monterrey to "demand social improvements"; 10,000 of their peers in Mexico City came out in support. Hellman stated that the demonstration was an effort to release the political prisoners detained in 1968. The students were "led by the remnants of the political organizations that guided the 1968 movement". Castillo closely followed the situation in the North. He described how Governor Eduardo A. Elizondo tried to impose new laws on the University of Nuevo León. The measures failed and resulted in Elizondo's resignation. Castillo maintained that the affair was a "triumfo [...] que tiene su raíz en el Movimiento Estudiantil Popular de 1968". He understood that the tension in the North had eased. Castillo, "Reapertura democrática", p.36. Castillo depicted the demonstration of 10 June as, "una manifestación absurda, sin banderas precisas y sin perspectivas halagüeñas para la lucha estudiantil".
- ⁴⁶ Héctor Aguilar Camín y Enrique Krauze, "La saña y el terror", *La Cultura en México*, No.490, 30 June 1971, p.ii.
- ⁴⁷ MacLachlan and Beezley, *El Gran Pueblo*, p.377.
- ⁴⁸ Carlos Marín, "Echeverría confesó, corrió a dos funcionarios y paró la investigación", *Proceso*, No.240, 8 July 1981, p.7; [N.A.], "'10 de junio': las fechas que no existen", *La Cultura en México*,

No.540, 14 June 1972, p.ii. With its series of quotes taken from the press, its ridicule of government statements ("no existen 'Los Halcones'") and its meticulous reporting, this article is in the style of Monsiváis, who was then director of *La Cultura*.

⁴⁹ Scherer, "Salinas, modernización, TLC", p.8.

⁵⁰ [N.A.], "Los intelectuales contra la represión: El derecho a manifestar sólo merece el respeto a las autoridades", *Excelsior*, No.19810, 13 June 1971, pp.4, 30. Many authors, "Declaración de 14 intelectuales", *Siempre!*, No.939, 23 June 1971, pp.4-5. In this second text the format was essentially the same as that in *Excelsior*. It added that to demonstrate was a constitutional right and thus deserved respect and protection.

⁵¹ Juan Chavez Rebolgar, "Ordena Echeverría una investigación exhaustiva de los trágicos disturbios y promete castigar a los responsables", *El Nacional*, No.15179, 12 June 1971, p.1.

⁵² Luis Suárez, *Echeverría rompe el silencio*, (México D.F., 1979), p.138.

⁵³ Octavio Paz, "Las palabras máscaras", *Excelsior*, No.19813, 16 June 1971, p.7.

⁵⁴ Paz, *Posdata*, p.54.

⁵⁵ Paz, "Las palabras máscaras", p.7.

⁵⁶ Castillo, "Reapertura democrática", p.37. Castillo claimed that both Echeverría and the students were provoked. He quoted the views of foreign journalists who perceived a case of violent opposition within the government from ultra-right conservatives. Castillo applauded Echeverría's dismissal of the Regent and Chief of Police and called for all those responsible to be punished.

⁵⁷ Paz, "Las palabras máscaras", p.7.

⁵⁸ Jacobo Zabludovsky, "La charla que puso fin a la tormenta", *Siempre!*, No.940, 30 June 1971, p.34. Nonetheless, Echeverría appeared tense with eyes focused sideways as if he were afraid to face the camera.

⁵⁹ Jorge Coca P., "Lo del 10 de junio sólo una zacapela", *El Universal*, No.23273, 7 April 1981, p.1. This was a stance that Echeverría would maintain. Ten years after the event, he reiterated that his conscience was clear: the events of 2 October 1968 and 10 June 1971 were unconnected.

⁶⁰ Zabludovsky, "La charla", pp.34-35.

⁶¹ Editorial, "Ruptura con el pasado", *Excelsior*, No.19813, 16 June 1971, p.6; Editorial, "Renace la esperanza", *Excelsior*, No.19813, 16 June 1971, p.6.

⁶² Octavio Paz, "Entre silencio y el grito", *Excelsior*, No.19826, 29 June 1971, p.7.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, pp.7-8.

⁶⁴ Echeverría, "II Informe de Gobierno", pp.149, 161. In his Address to the Nation on 1 September 1972, Echeverría also coincided with Fuentes who called for democracy of the trade unions. See, Fuentes, *Tiempo mexicano*, p.187. Both Paz and Fuentes wrote against excessive presidential powers. See, Paz, *Posdata*, especially pp.105-155; Fuentes, *Tiempo mexicano*, in particular pp.63-65,162-165.

⁶⁵ Echeverría, "II Informe de Gobierno", pp.149, 170; Paz, *Posdata*, pp.68-74.

⁶⁶ Scherer, "Salinas, modernización, TLC", p.8; Poniatowska, "No es que México", p.viii. Endorsing Paz, Poniatowska emphasised that he moved away from Echeverría when the promised inquiry failed to materialise.

⁶⁷ Julio Scherer García, "Octavio Paz: Veo una ausencia de proyectos. Las ideas se han evaporado", *Proceso*, No.58, 12 Dec. 1977, p.8; Enrique Krauze, "The Guerrilla Dandy", *The New Republic*, No.3832, 27 June 1988, p.34. With the benefit of hindsight, Krauze condemned Fuentes's relationship with Echeverría: After 10 June 1971, "Fuentes did not see what everyone saw, he saw what no-one saw [...] his support reached grotesque extremes".

⁶⁸ See *Plural*, Nos. 11-14, Aug. to Nov. 1972; Octavio Paz, letter to Tomás Segovia, 30 Nov. 1971, *Plural* archive, *Vuelta* Office, Mexico City. Paz expressed his anxiety about the current situation in Mexico and suggested a discussion in *Plural*.

⁶⁹ Héctor Manjarrez, "Memorias del 68, secuestros, 10 de junio, Avándaro", *La Cultura en México*, No.517, 5 Jan. 1972, p.ii. The mistake was rectified for subsequent editions. See Fuentes, *Tiempo mexicano*, p.166.

It is ironic that a second error of the same nature occurred. This time Fuentes describes the events on 10 June 1972. The then editor was Fuentes's staunch friend, Fernando Benítez; hence the wrong date was presumably an unfortunate coincidence. See, Carlos Fuentes, "El sistema mexicano un hombre llamado Echeverría", *Sábado*, No.55, 2 Dec. 1978, pp.2-4.

Octavio Paz, "El plagio, la plaga y la llaga", *Plural*, No.36, Sept. 1974, p.89. Fuentes was not the only one who suffered this embarrassment: Paz wrote of Jueves de Corpus, 10 June 1970. As the article appeared in Paz's own magazine, one must again assume that it was an oversight. These latter two typing errors do not appear to have attracted comment.

⁷⁰ Carlos Fuentes, "El régimen en crisis: ¿Democracia o represión?", *Siempre!*, No.939, 23 June 1971, p.12. The article is dated 14 June 1971.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p.12.

⁷² *Ibid.*, p.12.

⁷³ Fuentes, *Tiempo mexicano*, pp.169-171. By so doing, Fuentes contradicted Echeverría who had claimed that the two officials were innocent. (See Zabludovsky, "La charla", p.34.) Echeverría explained that the resignations were offered in advance of an inquiry. He accepted them only to ensure "que no haya una sombra de duda" over the investigation. Echeverría described Martínez Domínguez as "mi compañero y amigo" and Flores Curiel as an "excelente elemento". Echeverría later clarified that Martínez Domínguez was never accused of any criminal activity, but of having underestimated the tense situation and not anticipating the outbreak of violence. Within a few years both men had become governors: Martínez Domínguez of Nuevo León and Flores Curiel of Nayarit. See, Luis Suárez, *Echeverría en el sexenio de López Portillo*, (México D.F., 1983), p.261; Riding, *Mexico: Inside the Volcano*, p.80.

⁷⁴ Fuentes, *Tiempo mexicano*, pp.171-172.

⁷⁵ [N.A.], "Carlos Fuentes rechazó el Premio Mazatlán", *Excélsior*, no.20050, 12 Feb. 1972, p.6d.

⁷⁶ Those who condemned Fuentes for supporting of President Echeverría also overlooked Fuentes's attempts to stimulate democratic reforms. See, for example, Gabriel Zaid, "Carta a Carlos Fuentes", *Plural*, No.12, Sept. 1972, pp.52-53; José Fuentes Mares, "Carlos Fuentes, cambio de piel", *Proceso*, No.4, 27 Nov. 1976, pp.36-37; Gastón García Cantú, "En bajada", *Proceso*, No.23, 9 April 1977, p.23; Krauze, "The Guerrilla Dandy", p.34.

⁷⁷ Octavio Paz, "No me premies compadre", *Plural*, No.6, March 1972, p.43. Paz's comments appeared in a letter. Although Paz may not have chosen the headline, as editor he would surely have had a say in the matter. The inference is that Fuentes and Echeverría enjoyed a close relationship that imposed mutual obligations upon them.

⁷⁸ [N.A.], "Liberen a estudiantes de la UAS protesta G. Casanova", *Excélsior*, No.20051, 13 Feb. 1972, pp.1, 13; Vicente Leñero, "Contradice a la federación la actitud del Gobierno en Sinaloa, señala Flores Olea", *Excélsior*, No.20054, 16 Feb. 1972, pp.4, 17; Many authors, "Sinaloa y la autonomía universitaria", *Excélsior*, No.20054, 16 Feb. 1972, pp.4, 5. Among those who protested were Rector of UNAM Pablo González Casanova, Víctor Flores Olea, Vicente Leñero, Heberto Castillo, and Demetrio Vallejo.

⁷⁹ [N.A.], [N.T.], *Plural*, No.11, Aug. 1972, p.3.

⁸⁰ Fuentes, "Opciones críticas", p.8; Raúl Torres Barrón, "No recurre a la violencia, dialoga", *Excélsior*, No.20072, 12 March 1972, pp.1, 12. Fernando Benítez supported Fuentes's position. He explained, "para nosotros, el President Echeverría no sólo representa una apertura democrática, sino la única opción que tenemos actualmente. [...] El dilema de México en estos momentos es: Echeverría o el fascismo."

⁸¹ Zaid, "Carta a Carlos Fuentes", pp.52, 53.

⁸² Carlos Fuentes, "México 1972: Los escritores y la política", *Plural*, No.13, Oct. 1972, p.28. Octavio Paz, Telegram to Carlos Fuentes, 5 Sept. 1972, *Plural* Archive, *Vuelta* Office, Mexico City. Fuentes's tardy reply to Zaid apparently caused concern within the *Plural* camp, moving Paz to send the following message: "Alarmado por tu silencio y la imposibilidad penetrar tu fortaleza. ¿Vas a enviarnos tu respuesta a Zaid y tu contribución a la sadomasoquista redonda mesa?" If there was any rift between Paz and Fuentes at this point, Paz was at great pains to repair it. In the following edition of *Plural*, Paz dedicated an article to Fuentes, in which he stated, "la obra de Fuentes es ya una de las más ricas y variadas de la literatura contemporánea en nuestra lengua". See, Octavio Paz, "La pregunta de Carlos Fuentes", *Plural*, No.14, Nov. 1972, p.8.

⁸³ Krauze, "The Guerrilla Dandy", p.34.

⁸⁴ Fuentes, "Opciones críticas", p.8.

⁸⁵ Octavio Rodríguez Araujo, "México: En torno a las afirmaciones de Carlos Fuentes", *La Cultura en México*, No.554, 20 Sept. 1972, pp.vi-vii.

⁸⁶ A.P., "Echeverría, 'un Roosevelt mexicano'", p.10.

⁸⁷ Carlos Monsiváis, "La posibilidad de la polémica", *La Cultura en México*, No.548, 9 Aug. 1972, p.ii.

⁸⁸ Carlos Monsiváis, "México 1972: Los escritores y el política", *Plural*, No.13, Oct. 1972, p.24.

⁸⁹ [N.A.], "10 de junio", pp.i-ii. On the first anniversary of Jueves de Corpus an article in *La Cultura en México* scrutinised what had been said at the time. Contradicting Echeverría's declarations, ominous parallels were drawn between 10 June and 2 October 1968, and investigations into both events were demanded.

⁹⁰ Fuentes, "Mexico and its Demons", p.19.

⁹¹ La Redacción "Nota aclaratoria", *La Cultura en México*, No.564, 29 Nov. 1972, p.xii. *La noche de Tlatelolco* was belatedly recommended: in 1968 the Premio Villaurrutia had been suspended without notice due to a lack of funds. In 1972 it was agreed that there would be four prizes awarded of 25,000 pesos each to Ernesto Mejía Sánchez (1968), Eduardo Lizalde (1969), Elena Poniatowska (1970), and Carlos Montemayor (1971). The money was donated by the Secretaría de la Presidencia. The confusion surrounding the prize remains: as González de Alba pointed out, *La noche de Tlatelolco* was published in 1971; hence it was awarded in anticipation. See, Luis González de Alba, "Todo es premiable en la paz", *La Cultura en México*, No.564, 29 Nov. 1972, p.xii.

⁹² José Emilio Pacheco, "Memorias del 68: Tlatelolco dos de octubre", *La Cultura en México*, No.477, 31 March 1971, p.xi.

⁹³ Brewster, interview with Poniatowska. Poniatowska stressed that only a fraction of her letter was published, and she has the original "in a box somewhere".

⁹⁴ [N.A.], "Hablan: Mejía Sánchez, Lizalde, Poniatowska y Montemayor", *Excélsior*, No.20319, 9 Nov. 1972, p.27.

⁹⁵ Carlos Marín, "Elena Poniatowska, en cinco relatos presta su voz a quienes no la tienen", *Proceso*, No.214, 8 Dec. 1980, p.7.

⁹⁶ Poniatowska, "El movimiento estudiantil", pp.15-27; Elena Poniatowska, *Fuerte es el silencio*, (México D.F., 1980). See pp.69-77.

⁹⁷ Poniatowska, "El movimiento estudiantil", pp.24-25; Poniatowska, *Fuerte es el silencio*, pp.69-70.

⁹⁸ Fuentes Mares, "Carlos Fuentes, cambio de piel", pp.36-37; Enrique Krauze, "La comedia mexicana de Carlos Fuentes", *Vuelta*, No.139, June 1988, p.23.

Mares stated that Fuentes was suited to the post because he had the necessary characteristics for an ambassador: amnesia and discretion. He claimed that, when asked by the Spanish press about Tlatelolco, Fuentes denied Echeverría had held a government position under Díaz Ordaz's administration. Krauze criticised Fuentes' defence of Echeverría, particularly following the *Excélsior* crisis.

⁹⁹ Carlos Monsiváis, "No por mucho tiempo madurar amanece más temprano", *La Cultura en México*, No.708, 3 Sept. 1975, p.vii.

¹⁰⁰ Ochoa, "Fuentes", p.5.

¹⁰¹ Monsiváis, "No por mucho tiempo", p.vii.

¹⁰² Poniatowska, "No es que México", p.vii.

¹⁰³ La Redacción "Nota aclaratoria", p.xii. After Poniatowska refused the prize for *La noche de Tlatelolco*, the awards were hastily rearranged. On 14 November promoter Francisco Zendejas explained that Poniatowska would be given the 1970 Villaurrutia Prize for *Hasta no verte Jesús mío*. She accepted the 25,000 peso award. The confusion of dates had still not been clarified, however: *Hasta no verte Jesús mío* was published in 1969.

¹⁰⁴ The close ties between the intellectuals' and politicians' worlds are discussed in chapter one. See, Camp, "Intellectuals: Agents of Change?", p.308; Claire Brewster, interview with Ricardo Yoclevsky, Mexico City, 6 Dec. 1994; Claire Brewster, interview with Marco Antonio Velázquez Alba, Puebla City, 9 Dec. 1994. Yoclevsky and Velázquez Alba agreed that it is difficult to work with autonomy.

¹⁰⁵ Luis Echeverría, quoted by Carlos Marín, "28 años de agradecer un derecho que el Presidente en turno refrenda como gracia", *Proceso*, No.187, 2 June 1980, p.11.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p.11.

¹⁰⁷ Brewster, interview with Poniatowska.

¹⁰⁸ Monsiváis, "Notes on Self-Censorship", p.xix; Camp, *Politics in Mexico*, pp.142-143.

¹⁰⁹ Monsiváis, "No por mucho tiempo", p.vii.

¹¹⁰ See, *Excélsior*, No.21162, 15 March 1975, pp.1, 6; [N.A.], "1970-1976, consolidación del poder personal", *Proceso*, No.1, 6 Nov. 1976, pp.6-11.

¹¹¹ Editorial, "Represión, hoy menos que nunca", *Excélsior*, No.21162, 15 March 1975, p.6; see also *Excélsior*, No.21163, 16 March 1975.

¹¹² Johnson, *Mexican Democracy*, pp.60-61.

¹¹³ Poniatowska, "No es que México", p.v.

¹¹⁴ Editorial, "Confianza y responsabilidad", *Excélsior*, No.21635, 6 July 1976, p.6.

¹¹⁵ Krauze, *Mexico*, pp.750-751.

¹¹⁶ Elena Poniatowska, "Otra vez frente al papel desnudo: No podemos...", *Siempre!*, No.1205, 28 July 1976, p.24.

¹¹⁷ Julio Scherer García, [N.T.], *Proceso*, No.431, 4 Feb. 1985, p.18.

¹¹⁸ Madrazo, "Historia y prehistoria de *Vuelta II*", p.52.

¹¹⁹ Editorial, "Postura de *Excélsior*", *Excélsior*, No.21638, 9 July 1976, p.6.

¹²⁰ Poniatowska, "Otra vez frente", p.24.

- ¹²¹ Johnson, *Mexican Democracy*, pp.53-54.
- ¹²² Franco, "The Critique of the Pyramid", in Minc (ed.), *Latin American Fiction Today*, p.52.
- ¹²³ Javier Alejo, Minister of Government Properties, quoted by Camp, *Intellectuals and the State*, p.205.
- ¹²⁴ Carlos Monsiváis, "Pagés Llergo defendió la tolerancia y auspició la libertad de expresión", *Proceso*, No.686, 25 Dec. 1989, p.49; [N.A.], "De *Excelsior* a *Proceso*", p.15.
- ¹²⁵ Manuel Becerra Acosta, *Dos poderes*, (México D.F., 1984), pp.175-178. As the visit to the United States had been arranged over the telephone and Scherer had not discussed the matter with anyone else, Becerra Acosta concluded that Scherer's office had been bugged.
- ¹²⁶ Vicente Leñero, *Los periodistas*, (México D.F.), 1978; Franco, "The Critique of the Pyramid", pp.52-53. Franco explained that the term "novel" used to describe *Los periodistas* is ironic because, "if the official version claimed to be the truth, then other versions could only be fictions".
- ¹²⁷ [N.A.], "De *Excelsior* a *Proceso*", pp.12-15.
- ¹²⁸ Madrazo, "Historia y prehistoria de *Vuelta* II," p.51.
- ¹²⁹ Vicente Leñero, "Carta abierta a Octavio Paz en el 15 aniversario de la revista *Vuelta*", *Proceso*, No.783, 4 Nov. 1991, p.29.
- ¹³⁰ Enrique Krauze, "Carta abierta a Julio Scherer", *Proceso*, No.784, 11 Nov. 1991, p.30.
- ¹³¹ [N.A.], "De *Excelsior* a *Proceso*", p.14. The author was not necessarily convinced: Echeverría's discrepancies were listed in the same edition of *Proceso*. See, [N.A.], "Las contradicciones", *Proceso*, No.1, 6 Nov. 1976, p.9.
- ¹³² Heberto Castillo, "Libertad de expresión: derecho irrenunciable", *Proceso*, No.2, 13 Nov. 1976, p.40.
- ¹³³ Marín, "28 años de agradecer", p.11.
- ¹³⁴ Castillo, "Libertad de expresión", p.40.
- ¹³⁵ Krauze, "The Guerrilla Dandy", p.24.
- ¹³⁶ Fuentes, "El sistema mexicano", pp.2-4.
- ¹³⁷ José Anadón, "Entrevista A Carlos Fuentes (1980)", *Revista Iberoamericana*, April-Sept. 1983, Vol.49, p.625; Tittler, "Interview with Carlos Fuentes", p.53.
- ¹³⁸ Fernández, "Carlos Fuentes", p.16.
- ¹³⁹ Carlos Fuentes, "Los diez desafíos que debe superar México", *El Sol de México*, No.3637, 1 Dec. 1975, p.14.
- ¹⁴⁰ Camp, *Intellectuals and the State*, p.209.
- ¹⁴¹ The former dean of UNAM, Victor Flores Olea, was named under-secretary of Education; historian and writer Gastón García Cantú was appointed to the Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, and Jesús Reyes Heróles became Interior Minister.
- ¹⁴² Riding, *Mexico: Inside the Volcano*, pp.311, 333.
- ¹⁴³ Meyer and Sherman, *The Course of Mexican History*, p.680.
- ¹⁴⁴ Walter LaFeber, *Inevitable Revolutions: The United States in Central America*, (New York, 1993), pp.215-216.
- ¹⁴⁵ Heberto Castillo, "Para superar la crisis, una auténtica reforma", *Proceso*, No.26, 30 April 1977, p.44.
- ¹⁴⁶ López Portillo, quoted in Javier Peñalosa, "Condiciones de la reforma política", *Proceso*, No.26, 30 April 1977, pp.42-43.
- ¹⁴⁷ [N.A.], "Aplauso por la designación", *Proceso*, No.40, 8 Aug. 1977, p.16. As stated in chapter two, Campos Lemus was believed to have given the names of the Student Movement leaders to the authorities. It was also rumoured that he had acted as a provocateur, working to sabotage the movement.
- ¹⁴⁸ Castañeda, *Utopia Unarmed*, p.196.
- ¹⁴⁹ Poniatowska, "El movimiento estudiantil", p.27; Poniatowska, *Fuerte es el silencio*, p.75.
- ¹⁵⁰ [N.A.], "Proceso nacional", *Proceso*, No.23, 9 April 1977, p.20. It was claimed that Roel reproached Fuentes for paying too much attention to his literary pursuits rather than his diplomatic duties. The accusations seem unlikely, and even if they were true it is doubtful that Fuentes would have believed such criticism to be sufficiently serious for him to resign his post.
- ¹⁵¹ García Cantú, "En bajada", p.23.
- ¹⁵² [N.A.], "Carlos Fuentes responde a la revista *Proceso*", *El Sol de México*, No.4131, 15 April 1977, p.17.
- ¹⁵³ Tittler, "Interview with Carlos Fuentes", p.53.
- ¹⁵⁴ Blanco Moheno, "Ser intelectual no es ser inteligente", p.70.
- ¹⁵⁵ Carlos Fuentes, quoted in Alejandro Avilés, "Tlatelolco no se olvida", *Proceso*, No.24, 16 April 1977, p.35; Miguel Cabildo, "Durazo perseguía como perros a los guerrilleros", *Proceso* No.25, 23 April 1977, p.24.
- ¹⁵⁶ Avilés, "Tlatelolco no se olvida", p.35. Politicians accused Fuentes of being immature, of having degraded his personality as a writer, and of displaying a lack of patriotism. However, Alejandro Gómez

Arias rejoiced "que no todos los mexicanos han perdido la memoria". Avilés himself claimed that Fuentes's stance, like that of Paz in 1968, "salva el prestigio internacional de México".

¹⁵⁷ Elena Poniatowska, "Díaz Ordaz y la memoria creadora", *Fem*, Vol.II, No.3, April-June 1977, pp.81, 83. Although the article is undated, it is unlikely that Poniatowska would have written such an essay after the march. Her tone was markedly different in her detailed depiction of the events of the rally. See Poniatowska, *Fuerte es el silencio*, pp.72-73.

¹⁵⁸ Poniatowska, "El movimiento estudiantil", p.26.

¹⁵⁹ Carlos Marin, "Rechazo público a Díaz Ordaz", *Proceso*, No.26, 30 April 1977, pp.18-19.

¹⁶⁰ Poniatowska, *Fuerte es el silencio*, pp.72-73, Poniatowska, "El movimiento estudiantil de 1968", pp.25-26.

¹⁶¹ See in particular *Proceso*, No.40, 8 Aug. 1977, pp.15, 31, 33. Díaz Ordaz was photographed rubbing his eye, the caption reads, "los misterios del ojo". Fernando Benítez, "Vislumbre de Carlos Fuentes", *Sábado*, No.376, 28 Dec. 1984, p.3. Benítez explained that Fuentes resigned, "cuando un gobierno ciego, prepotente y oportunista, nombró primer embajador de la España democrática el autor de la cruel matanza de Tlatelolco". Rius, "Progresivo", *Proceso*, No.40, 8 Aug. 1977, p.33.

¹⁶² Handelman, *Mexican Politics*, p.44. Handelman concluded that although it became "easier for small political parties to attain legal recognition", the reform ensured that the PRI still controlled Congress.

¹⁶³ Castillo, "Para superar la crisis", p.45.

¹⁶⁴ Barry Carr, "Mexico: The Perils of Unity and the Challenge of Modernization", in Barry Carr and Steve Ellner, (eds.), *The Latin American Left From the Fall of Allende to Perestroika*, (London, 1993), p.85.

¹⁶⁵ Camp, *Politics in Mexico*, pp.170-174.

¹⁶⁶ Philip, *The Presidency*, p.107. According to Philip, Reyes Heróles was removed from office, indicating that López Portillo was "retreating from the political reform" and becoming more self-confident in political matters.

¹⁶⁷ Heberto Castillo, "El próximo movimiento de trabajadores: Los caídos nos obligan a la lucha", *Proceso*, No.100, 2 Oct. 1978, p.19.

¹⁶⁸ Poniatowska, "Diez años después", p.19.

¹⁶⁹ Víctor Avilés, "Entrevista con Sócrates Amado Campos Lemus", *Nexos*, No.121, Jan. 1988, pp.82-83; Poniatowska, *Fuerte es el silencio*, p.66; Poniatowska, "El movimiento estudiantil" p.23. Campos Lemus maintained that his political views were unchanged. In 1988, he voiced respect for Fidel Castro, and claimed that this proved his revolutionary credentials.

¹⁷⁰ Monsiváis, "Dos de octubre", pp.2-5.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p.3.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, p.5.

¹⁷³ Carlos Monsiváis, "1968: Perfiles, claves, silencios, alteraciones", *Nexos*, No.9, Sept. 1978, pp.3-6. As discussed in chapter six, Monsiváis also adopted this technique when discussing who was to blame for the Zapatista rebellion. In both articles Monsiváis included the view of "a writer". It is likely that Monsiváis's "writers" echoed some of his own thoughts. See Monsiváis, "¿Y quién mayor culpa tiene?", *El Financiero*, No.3230, 23 Jan. 1994, p.24.

¹⁷⁴ Monsiváis, "1968: Perfiles, claves", p.3.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p.5; Elena Poniatowska, "Si luchas por la libertad tienes que estar preso, si luchas por alimentos tienes que sentir hambre", *La Cultura en México*, No.744, 11 May 1976, p.ix. Revueltas was arrested on 16 November 1968 and remained in Lecumberri Prison until 13 May 1971. He died in April 1976, of natural causes. Poniatowska remarked that Revueltas had been ill since 1968, and that his imprisonment had worsened his condition.

¹⁷⁶ Carlos Monsiváis, "Si una nación entera se avergüenza...", *Proceso*, No.101, 9 Oct. 1978, pp.18-20. The title of this article is taken from Paz's "México: Olimpiada de 1968".

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p.20.

¹⁷⁸ Carlos Monsiváis, "2 de octubre de 1968 / 2 de octubre de 1978", *La Cultura en México*, No.868, 11 Oct. 1978, p.ix.

¹⁷⁹ García Flores, "Aclarar los humos", p.iii.

¹⁸⁰ Fuentes, *Tiempo mexicano*, p.165.

¹⁸¹ García Cantú, "En bajada", p.23.

¹⁸² Fuentes, "El sistema mexicano", p.3.

¹⁸³ Octavio Paz, "Hora cumplida (1929-1985)", *Vuelta*, No.103, June 1985, p.12.

¹⁸⁴ Scherer, "Octavio Paz: Veo una ausencia", p.9.

¹⁸⁵ H.B., "Entrevista con Elena Poniatowska", *Nexos*, No.121, Jan. 1988, p.102.

4. The earthquakes of September 1985: The emergence of civil society

Democracia puede ser también, la importancia súbita de cada persona. Carlos Monsiváis, 20 September 1985.¹

At 7.19 a.m., on 19 September 1985, an earthquake measuring 7.8 on the Richter Scale struck Mexico City. The tremor lasted for ninety seconds and caused widespread devastation. Estimates of between 10,000 and 20,000 deaths are generally cited and thousands more were injured.² Many buildings collapsed, among them multi-storey blocks of flats, hospitals, schools, the main telephone exchange, and the headquarters of the Mexican television company, *Televisa*. Shock and panic escalated at 8.38 p.m. the following day when a second quake registering 6.5 hit the city. Among the additional casualties were volunteers who had been working to rescue those already trapped in the rubble.

Official sources stated that within minutes of the tragedy, President Miguel De la Madrid instigated rescue operations: all emergency services and the Army were to participate.³ Popular opinion, however, recorded that the government initially failed to recognise the full extent of the damage, exposing its inability to respond to a national emergency.⁴ De la Madrid was severely criticised for inadequate leadership and for declining outside help: groups of overseas volunteers experienced in excavation work were initially refused entry into Mexico. It was claimed that this lack of coordination increased the fatalities. In the absence of the authorities' organisational skills *sociedad civil* took over; human rights organisations, cultural groups, students, workers and individuals formed rescue teams and provided food and shelter for those left homeless. Amid the chaos and destruction, Mexicans learned to use their own resources. Monsiváis observed, "it strengthened the will to act, to contemplate the small and

immense consequences of individual action within collective action".⁵ Fuentes remarked, "Mexican society acted more quickly and efficiently than the government and thereby discovered its own powers".⁶

As Mexico began to recover, charges of corruption against construction companies were levied: newer buildings had collapsed without resistance whereas older ones nearby were undamaged. The fragility of life and the weak structure upon which Mexican society was based were revealed. In reaction, perhaps, to the popular collective participation and the accusations made against the government, a return to "normality" was announced. Citizens felt that attempts to clear the disaster zones were too hasty, giving them the impression that their suffering was being swept aside. Poniatowska recalled,

it was absurd, asking the people to return to normality. [...] One night, bulldozers were sent to flatten a building that still had bodies and human remains inside. [...] This was the government's attitude: we're going to return to normality, we're a strong country.⁷

Although horrified and saddened by the tragedy, neither Paz nor Fuentes addressed it in their essays. When interviewed, Paz stated that the earthquakes, "como un espejo mostró los errores históricos de dos generaciones". He added that the Mexican spirit and virtues were also revealed.⁸ As had occurred in 1968, the historical perspective of his analysis deflected blame from the current government. In *Cristóbal Nonato*, Fuentes recreated the devastation and chaos, the courageous, spontaneous reaction of the volunteer rescuers who discovered that they could react more effectively without government interference, and the accusations of corruption made against the construction companies.⁹

Almost immediately, Monsiváis and Poniatowska offered practical and moral support. Through their essays, they recreated the pain, suffering, hope and spirit of the Mexican people. Poniatowska considers her articles following the earthquakes to be her most important work.¹⁰ She explained how her methodology differed from that of Monsiváis: "El trabaja las ideas y yo las emociones y los sentimientos. El siempre me dice [...] que soy muy sentimental y que él es el que sintetiza los acontecimientos y el que da las ideas."¹¹ Monsiváis's chronicles of September and October 1985, however, reveal a warmer side to his character that is usually hidden. The result is arguably his finest writing; certainly the most vivid and intense.¹²

Within hours of the first tremor, Monsiváis went to the most affected areas and immediately drafted his experiences. Poniatowska described the power of the resulting chronicles: "Guía en medio del polvo y del espanto, relata la hazaña absolutamente consciente y decidada de un sector importante de la población que con su impulso desea restaurar armonías y sentidos vitales."¹³ Monsiváis drew the scenes before his eyes: the devastation, terror, sounds and smells created by the earthquake; the raw emotions that were a common experience to all present. The impact on him was evident: Monsiváis abandoned his traditional wit and cynicism, no longer "muy *aloof*, muy retirada, muy distanciada",¹⁴ but sensitive to those around him, sharing their emotions. The change of style gives additional poignancy to his work: Monsiváis, who had witnessed and chronicled so many misfortunes, was deeply affected by the scenes before him. His own thoughts, identifiable in italic font and written in the first person, punctuate the essay. Monsiváis depicted the anguish of parents waiting for news of their children outside a school that had collapsed. Voicing their agony and desperate impulse to tear

at the rubble with their bare hands, Monsiváis added: "Yo en su caso hubiera hecho lo mismo".¹⁵ He was close to the parents' torment, they were united in their suffering: "La impotencia ante la agonía de alguien que está nomás a unos pasos, es lo peor que me ha pasado, se lo juro."¹⁶

Monsiváis's description of the evacuation of four buildings at the Centro Médico, illustrated the overwhelming nature of the situation: "Ese terror, el mío, el de mis colegas, el de las enfermos, todavía me impregna." His words revealed the fear that permeated Monsiváis; he was neither willing nor able to ignore it. He explained his compulsion to write: "No es morbo, lo juro es la imposibilidad de ocuparme de otra cosa." Again Monsiváis used "lo juro": he judged this to be appropriate; he was in a position to assess what aspects should be included. He added, "esta tragedia se de largo alcance y nos involucra a todos, con o sin frases hechas. A lo mejor te parezco muy discursivo, pero elegí el rollo para no ponerme a llorar."¹⁷ Monsiváis was intensely moved by the catastrophe, his work as a reporter was his means of defence and survival.

Amid the scenes of destruction, Monsiváis depicted the strength of the Mexican people. Small groups of volunteers were formed, and resources and skills combined in an intense effort to rescue those trapped. Monsiváis explained the significance:

El 19, y en respuesta ante las víctimas, la ciudad de México conoció una *toma de poderes*, de las más nobles de su historia, que trascendió con muchos los límites de solidaridad, la conversión de un pueblo en gobierno y del desorden oficial en orden civil. Democracia puede ser también, la importancia súbita de cada persona.¹⁸

In a dignified, spontaneous move, citizens seized the initiative and acted together for the common good. This, in Monsiváis's view, was democracy: popular participation in government ordered the surrounding chaos.

The theme of popular cooperation was expanded in Monsiváis's subsequent articles. He wrote of "un nuevo protagonista", called "sociedad civil", explaining that membership comprised all those forced to act for themselves in the presence of the bewildered bureaucracy. Monsiváis then examined the government's response and its determination to return to "normality". He reasoned that it stemmed from fear: those in power were afraid of the people's capacity and capability:

¿A qué "normalización" se puede regresar? [...] El gran dilema de la reconstrucción es si la sociedad civil tendrá voz y voto en los hechos que conciernen. Ese es el principio de la verdadera normalización. [...] Lo que al gobierno le conviene, es abogarlo todo en la declaración: "¡Qué grandísimo pueblo somos! ¡Qué entereza la del mexicano! ¡No busquemos culpables! ¡Reafirmemos nuestros lazos fraternos!" Esa retórica ya no, por favor.¹⁹

Monsiváis angrily condemned the paternalist nature of the State, the inadequacies of which were exposed by the earthquakes; and its obvious desire to restrain those who were willing and able to occupy the vacuum created by political ineptitude. The government may want to return to the complete control of the past, but "normality" had changed: civil society had emerged and was demanding its rights. Reflecting the popular perceptions that he was helping to create, Monsiváis described the situation as "el acontecimiento definitivo, un ante y un después del terremoto". The earthquakes had shaken the structure of Mexican life; any attempts by those in power to harness and direct the collective action only served to emphasise their distance from the public. Monsiváis recalled the official orders for people to remain in their homes; yet had they

done so, he stressed, many more would have died. Popular participation in the rescue operations was essential: "por eso, nos oponemos a una 'normalización'".²⁰

Monsiváis's use of the first person and inclusion of his emotions gave weight to the claims of the earthquake victims, and illustrated his empathy with them. He described a meeting between inhabitants of the badly damaged Tlatelolco district and their government representative, *diputada* Elba Esther. The crowd was restless and angry; denouncements were made about the quality of the Nuevo León building, a high-rise residential block of flats that had collapsed. The *diputada* was not allowed to speak. Monsiváis explained why: "para oponerse a cualquier condena del gobierno, Elba Esther quiso tirar rollo y manipularnos". Monsiváis included himself among those whom the government would like to manipulate. A confrontation took place as soldiers denied access to those seeking permission to remove personal documents from their ruined homes: "Les dije, 'si eso es la labor de ustedes, pues agrédannos, pero a todos'."²¹ For an instant, Monsiváis was the victims' spokesman. He directly intervened and in so doing risked physical injury. Although not one of them, nor personally sharing their plight, Monsiváis abandoned his role as observer and commentator and instinctively stepped forward as their organic intellectual.

On 2 October 1985 Monsiváis returned to Tlatelolco. Flowers were placed on the ground to remember the dead of two tragic events. An architect asked Monsiváis to say a few words. Monsiváis recalled, "dije que una fecha así no podía pasar desapercibida. Lo del 68 fue un crimen por soberbia; lo de ahora es un crimen por negligencia, y esas muertes deben contribuir a que el pueblo viva mejor."²² Again, Monsiváis was seen by those present as a natural choice to articulate the crowd's

sorrow. His impromptu speech demonstrated that he shared the grief and frustrations of those present. Monsiváis stated that those who died were victims of government policies. He then articulated the fear of the inhabitants of Tlatelolco, the loss of confidence in the political system and despair for the future. Monsiváis had not been a Student Movement leader, nor had he suffered direct material or personal loss as a result of the earthquakes, but he was invited to speak for those who lived in Tlatelolco. By being there, sharing their suffering and articulating it to others through his chronicles, Monsiváis had crossed the social divide and was recognised as “one of them” by the victims of the two episodes.²³ There were grounds for tentative hope: Monsiváis recalled that the effect of his remarks upon one man, “nos anima a seguir en la lucha por nuestros derechos”. The man approached Monsiváis and, without lifting his head, said: “Yo estoy con ustedes. Yo perdí a toda mi familia. ¿Qué más puedo perder?”²⁴ This scene reveals much about popular perceptions of Monsiváis. He was not only seen as sympathetic to those denied justice, but actively working to improve civil equity. It also exposes Monsiváis’s commitment: the reaction of this one man made the struggle for “nuestros derechos” worthwhile, inspiring Monsiváis to continue. Their cause was the same: they were all victims of a political system that denied individual rights and voices.

In the aftermath of the earthquakes, Monsiváis drew attention to the different issues as they arose. He used the plight of the seamstresses of San Antonio Abad to illustrate the distinction between rich and poor: dead and injured employees were ignored in their employers’ rush to rescue machinery and fabric from the rubble. Monsiváis described the neighbourhood as the “epifoco moral del temblor”.²⁵ He pointed out that in the absence of reparation for their injuries and lack of work, the

women took matters into their own hands and formed the Unión de Costureras en Lucha. In *Entrada libre*, Monsiváis highlighted how the earthquakes revealed working conditions that reduced women to “esclavas tradicionales”, suffering a humiliation that was, “algo imposible de modificar, un mal del siglo.”²⁶ Their plight was then taken up by the press, and the public pledged generous offers of financial help. Although he did not single out the efforts of any journalist or publication, Monsiváis noted that Poniatska forged lasting ties with the seamstresses and their spokeswoman Evangelina Corona.²⁷ Monsiváis’s and Poniatska’s powerful position was apparent: although ostensibly acting as chroniclers of the seamstresses’ action, they directly led public opinion into supporting the group.

Other journalists echoed these sentiments widening public awareness of the injustice. On 19 October 1985, approximately 4,000 people marched to Los Pinos to demand compensation. Monsiváis described the atmosphere as “trunfalista”, but warned, “faltan detalles, y los detalles han sido siempre el feudo de los empresarios”.²⁸ Although under no illusions, Monsiváis nonetheless stressed the transformation of attitudes: women workers were aware of their rights; moreover, others were supporting them. “Antes - informan feministas con años de experiencia organizativa - costaba meses convencer a una trabajadora de la existencia de sus derechos”.²⁹ Need and solidarity provided the stimuli for change: “Se convierten en militantes de urgencia.” A previously compliant work-force had become resolute; class boundaries were torn down as employees demanded audiences with the president.³⁰

Monsiváis’s articles affirmed and reinforced the growth of civil society. He illustrated that it had arisen from common necessities: “lugares donde vivir,

indemnizaciones, derechos sindicales, derechos ciudadanos, castigo a los culpables de la catástrofe del edificio Nuevo León". Evidently Monsiváis viewed union protection and the punishment of construction companies to be as important as the provision of living quarters. Yet, as Monsiváis revealed, the implications for Mexican society went beyond immediate reparations and retribution. He repeated the demands of the protesting crowd and asked, "¿a qué horas se ocurrirá al gobierno un programa de vivienda popular, no forzado por circunstancias trágicas?". Monsiváis portrayed the changes stimulated by the earthquakes to be part of a wider movement: "La suya es una lucha a largo plazo que logros a corto plazo harán posible."³¹

Yet this optimism was soon revised, in December 1985 Monsiváis lamented:

¿En dónde ha quedado toda la generosidad, la solidaridad, la lucha de los damnificados, la promesa de fortalecimiento de la sociedad civil? ¿Qué se hizo de la impresión tan repetida de un México-antes-y-después-del-temblor? [...] Como era previsible, todo se disipó, el destino de México es el eterno retorno del fracaso, estas ruinas que ves son la conciencia nacional, todo ha quedado igual con el añadido de anécdotas tremendistas o sensibleras. A tres meses y medio, es posible afirmar que no hay un México-antes-y-después-del-temblor. Es el mismo de siempre. [...] Ya pasó la moda de la solidaridad.³²

Monsiváis's condemnation was surely too harsh. The strength of the victims, so apparent in the first weeks, would have been weakened by a need for basic living requirements such as housing, water and electricity. Had Monsiváis misread the situation after the earthquakes? Did his own ambitions for political change distort his sense of perspective concerning Mexican solidarity? Did Monsiváis misjudge unity at a time of tragedy for something more profound?

It is conceivable that Monsiváis adopted this tone in an attempt to rally further support for the casualties. In the festive season he appealed to *Proceso* readers to recreate the spirit shown in the immediate aftermath of the earthquakes and to incorporate it into Mexican life. Whatever his reason, the above passage was not included in *Entrada libre*, indicating that it was a reaction to something specific at that time and not for later reflection. In his book Monsiváis showed more understanding, reasoning, "no se puede ser mártir para siempre. Si los del Nuevo León cedimos y negociamos, no fue porque creyéramos que se nos daba lo justo, sino por la fatiga." He concluded,

la experiencia del terremoto le dio al término *sociedad civil* una credibilidad inesperada. También, y casi instante, se advirtieron las inmensas dificultades. No hay tal cosa como la independencia absoluta; los recursos del Estado y la clase empresarial son lo suficientemente vastos como para frustrar los proyectos independientes, y no es mera cuestión del deseo la consolidación de espacios históricos, de la psicología colectiva y de las estructuras de poder.³³

Civil society emerged from the rubble of the earthquakes and demonstrated the strength of its power. Yet the political system and historical precedents conspired against it impeding it from achieving its potential.

Although she was not immediately aware of the full extent of the tragedy, Poniatowska's response to the earthquakes was more prolific than that of Monsiváis. On 19 September, Poniatowska gave a class close to her home in the South of the city and noted that only a few students attended. There was talk of an earthquake, but its severity was not realised. That evening, she hosted a supper party; her guests from the nearby exclusive El Pedregal district were equally oblivious of the devastation in other parts of the metropolis.³⁴ Their ignorance should be seen in the context that the

telephone exchange had been destroyed; *Televisa* was out of action, and electricity and transport services were severely disrupted. Nonetheless, local radio stations were already broadcasting urgent messages for help; it is remarkable that the news took so long to spread.

It was not until the following evening that Poniatoſka went into the city where, "a mí me empezó a entrar el horror del terremoto".³⁵ Once she realised the extent of the disaster, Poniatoſka was compelled to help. It took the joint efforts of Julio Scherer and Monsiváis to persuade her that she could contribute more effectively by writing:

Scherer phoned me and said, 'what are you doing? I've heard that you are out there in the debris, in the fallen buildings, instead of working as a journalist.' I replied, 'I don't want to work as a journalist, what use is it?' He told me, 'no, you have to write'. Monsiváis agreed; he asked me why was I removing the debris, when there were many people much stronger than me. So I began to write.³⁶

Poniatoſka quickly became absorbed in the task of taking and recounting testimonies. Initially she sent her work to her usual outlet, *Novedades*. Five articles depicting the misery and suffering of the victims, and the bravery of the rescuers were published before Poniatoſka was told not to submit any more on the grounds that "they would depress the readers".³⁷ Poniatoſka's last two essays discussed the case of the seamstresses of San Antonio Abad and the issue of whether wages should be paid to those no longer able to work. Such views may have been too politically sensitive for *Novedades*. Undeterred, Poniatoſka moved to the more receptive *La Jornada*; her articles appeared daily until December 1985; *Proceso* printed two of Poniatoſka's chronicles.³⁸

As in 1968, Poniatowska provided a platform from which the public could express their sorrow and fears:

Hablaba con todo el mundo. [...] Llegaba yo, que qué pasó, qué les hace falta. Uno decía que tenía mucho hambre, entonces íbamos por una torta mientras platicábamos. [...] Yo creo que ahí tengo muchísima suerte, porque siempre me ha sido muy fácil entablar relación con la gente.³⁹

Both Monsiváis and Poniatowska were trusted by the victims because they were deemed to have shared their experiences. Such exposure had a heavy price: Antonio Lazcano Araujo, who worked with Poniatowska after the earthquakes, described “una obra terrible”.⁴⁰ Poniatowska admitted, “este tipo de cosas te desgasta muchísimo emocionalmente”.⁴¹ One of her students, Alicia Trueba, illustrated the physical toll: “Día tras día Elena llegaba [...] sus ojeras eran cada vez más grandes, más oscuras, y al verla tan pequeña, tan frágil, pensábamos ‘¡cómo!, ¡cómo puede resistir!’”⁴²

Evidently Poniatowska did not work alone on this project. Trueba explained, “[Elena] nos pidió ayuda, ayuda que sabíamos que ella no necesitaba, su intención, como buena maestra, era despertar inquietudes en sus alumnos.”⁴³ The implication is that Poniatowska believed her approach assisted the victims and her students alike. Although she may have minimised her own role as an intellectual, Poniatowska encouraged others to adopt her methodology, amplifying its use. The resulting 1,700 pages of testimonies were presented to the publishing house Ediciones Era, where they were condensed to 310 for the book. Among the inevitable detail lost in the editing process was the vital role played by Poniatowska in transmitting desperately needed information. Although this omission is understandable given the passage of time, the impression remains that, as in *La noche de Tlatelolco*, Poniatowska diminished her part in the creation of *Nada, nadie* allowing others to speak. She subsequently clarified,

“[es] un libro colectivo hecho con las voces de todos, con el sufrimiento de todos, con la pérdida de todos y la reconstrucción de todos. Unos dan su voz, otros la recogan.”⁴⁴

An analysis of what was excluded from the book reveals much about the practical help provided by Poniadowska. In one article, Poniadowska interviewed psychologists who explained that many victims suppressed their emotions, trying to deny what had happened. Poniadowska quoted the opinion of Dr Galia Castro Campillo: “Es indispensable que se les estimule a hablar.”⁴⁵ The essay was published a few days after *Novedades* ceased to publish Poniadowska’s work, and endorsed her decision to continue to take testimonies. Poniadowska stated that Castro Campillo was giving psychological support to the victims and relatives; she emphasised, “es absolutamente gratuito”, and supplied the names, addresses and telephone numbers of other participating doctors. Although she was using her position as a journalist to advertise the sessions, Poniadowska nonetheless felt inadequate; as she had done after the Tlatelolco massacre.⁴⁶ She asked:

¿Cómo vamos a ayudar socialmente a la gente que ya no tiene a nadie?
¿Cómo vamos a asesorar a los sicólogos? El pasmo absoluto ante la muerte
¿cómo se maneja científicamente? ¿Qué diablos podríamos decirle a los
miles de Eduardo Reyes en el Distrito Federal?⁴⁷

In her daily columns she publicised the many services available to victims; her coverage of stories such as that of Eduardo Reyes, whose wife and children had been killed, lessened the isolation of the survivors. Poniadowska neither needed to say anything to Reyes nor to the many others in his position, she listened to them, allowing them to voice their pain. One man wanted to thank “Mario” who had extricated him from the rubble.⁴⁸ By voicing his gratitude, Poniadowska put all those who were saved in touch their rescuers and emphasised their vital function. She listed the names of missing

people and the telephone numbers of those who were seeking information about them. Three days after the publication of "El futuro, una gran interrogante", Poniatowska reported that psychologist Livia Sedeño was also offering her services. Providing her telephone number, she added that Sedeño was "una mujer tierna y amorosa", who came from the disaster area. She had direct experience of the trauma, "y sabe lo que significa dejar morir a la gente".⁴⁹ Poniatowska met Sedeño and checked her credentials before recommending her, and thus played an active part as coordinator. None of the above details appear in *Nada, nadie*.

The book's title came from the people involved. Poniatowska explained that when she asked those helping in the rescue operations for their names they generally answered "nadie", not deeming their contribution to be worthy of individual recognition. She also adopted this tactic by playing down her role as author.⁵⁰ "Nada", she added, represented the government's insensitivity to the suffering of the victims and its incomprehension of the consequent changes in society.⁵¹ Criticism of the government and emergency services formed an increasing proportion of the victims' comments. The Army was an early target. Soldiers with little or no local knowledge were deployed to Mexico City to take control of the situation. This incensed residents desperate to rescue members of their families, many of whom knew exactly where the missing would be located.⁵² As time passed, further charges were brought: "El ejército llegó, es cierto, a acordonar la zona, a estorbar, a robar. Delante de mis ojos robaron dinero y joyas. Puedo testificarlo [...] tengo nombres..."⁵³ Poniatowska clarified:

It was senseless to cordon off an area because the families or friends were saying "here's the bathroom, here's the bedroom, here's the children's bedroom, search here. Here is where you need the picks and spades." [...]

Although I never personally saw a soldier stealing, I was told that they would cordon off an area on a pretext and then stole things.⁵⁴

Monsiváis stated that, in his speech of 3 October 1985, De la Madrid praised the "topos" (volunteers who dug into the rubble to rescue trapped survivors, and who brought out the bodies of the dead). What the president failed to recognise, Monsiváis added, "es el doble esfuerzo de los "topos", su lucha contra la incomprehension de militares y funcionarios, la angustia centuplicada ante la incapacidad oficial de unir esfuerzos, de imponer criterios nacionales".⁵⁵ Additional accusations against the Army, voiced through Poniatowska, included the demolition of a building from which cries for help had been heard: "Una persona [...] murió víctima de la arbitrariedad del poder".⁵⁶ One soldier was reported to have abused a five year old girl.⁵⁷ There were accounts of looting by police and security guards.⁵⁸ A volunteer driver transporting provisions was stopped and attacked by police. Poniatowska supplied the patrol number for verification.⁵⁹

Yet in repeating the comments of her informants, what function was Poniatowska performing? As Jean Franco noted, in the process of writing testimonial literature,

the intellectual virtually disappears from the text in order to let 'the subaltern speak', thus raising the question of her relationship to the political struggle she records. Is it that of bystander? An impartial observer? Is she creating on the basis of somebody else's raw material? Or is it possible by means of double-voicing to bridge the gulf between the intelligentsia and the popular classes?⁶⁰

As in *La noche de Tlatelolco*, Poniatowska's inclusion of such testimonies is tantamount to offering her tacit support and considerable authority. Moreover, these

accusations were made in the press at the time; coordinating and articulating such sentiments indicated Poniadowska's defiance of the political leaders. She was at one with the victims; her indignation was unspoken, but nonetheless added to theirs as she voiced their suffering, and compelled her readers to sympathise. Poniadowska may have "virtually disappeared" from the text, but the fact that it bore her name gave it considerable weight. Poniadowska thus directed public opinion against the authorities. Franco acknowledged, "lurking under the surface is a certain utopian belief in popular power".⁶¹ Although not overtly writing in favour of the Mexican public, Poniadowska's position was clear. She repeated, and thus amplified, the numerous criticisms made against the government, underlining how De la Madrid failed to provide a coordinated rescue plan.⁶² She explained his attitude: "We're going to return to normality, we're a strong country. [...Later foreign aid] was accepted when the magnitude of the disaster was realised, but initially the government line was, 'no, we're very macho, we can do everything ourselves'."⁶³ Poniadowska stressed that the priority was control, "para mantener las instituciones [...] y sobre todo el poder". The earthquakes demonstrated the government's inability to respond; she added that it was left to the public to restore order.⁶⁴ By reporting such charges Poniadowska encouraged Mexicans who were not directly involved also to take the initiative.

Through the words, actions and attitudes of her interviewees, Poniadowska marked the rapid growth of civil society. Poniadowska, however, praised two groups from the established order: "The Salvation Army [...was] so efficient, so quick, so rapid, so intelligent. [...] The clergy also knew what to do. The monks arrived and washed and embalmed the bodies and put them into coffins."⁶⁵ She also recalled that, from the outset, radio hams and local stations transmitted news and details of survivors

across the country; food kitchens were established and staffed by volunteers.⁶⁶ A Red Cross worker asked a crowd for funds to buy face masks; within five minutes M\$70,000 had been raised.⁶⁷ The combined force of such movements from below led to a reassessment of the strength and value of the people. In September 1988, at the presentation of *Nada, nadie*, Poniatowska recalled the “iniciativa espontánea de la gente, [...] que asustó al gobierno e hizo decir al presidente De la Madrid: ‘Al gobierno le corresponde evitar que ocurra esta anarquía.’”⁶⁸ Poniatowska was aware of the government’s fear of independent action by the people and was clearly unafraid to reaffirm these views at the end of De la Madrid’s term of office.

Of increasing anxiety to the government were the numerous complaints about the quality of building materials used in the construction industry. Poniatowska recalled, “the people said that the government was at fault because [...] the government buildings fell down: hospitals and maternity units fell down. Hospitals must **never** fall down.”⁶⁹ In *Nada, nadie* engineer Raúl Pérez Pereyra reproached himself for not having acted before the earthquakes: “Debo precisamente a mi profesión, siento una cierta culpabilidad al no haber podido detectar en el edificio donde vivíamos, Tehuantepec número 12, las fallas que ocasionaron su colapso.”⁷⁰ Allegations of fraud were supported by hard evidence. Pérez Pereyra explained that, although all new buildings were given specific guidelines, it was stressed throughout his training that, “un ingeniero debe construir económicamente”. Illicit fortunes were made, putting the lives of Mexican citizens at risk.⁷¹ Gustavo Barrera, a technical advisor on the construction of the Nuevo León building, warned that he had written proof that those who died when it collapsed were killed by government corruption.⁷² Monsiváis, too, drew attention to the claims against the government, quoting a banner carried to the Attorney office by

survivors of the Tehuantepec building: "Exigimos justicia ante el asesinato colectivo de más de 80 personas."⁷³ The mood had changed: the collective grief and the energy of the rescue efforts had been converted into anger.

Such hostility found an outlet in popular protest. One cause already mentioned is that of the seamstresses. Poniowska dedicated much coverage to their plight and became friends with their spokeswoman, Evangelina Corona.⁷⁴ Unusually, Poniowska herself provided the background to the women's story: "Si alguien ha sido violentado y golpeado en este año de 1985, si alguien ha sufrido, han sido precisamente ellas. El sismo reveló que de todos los explotados en el Distrito Federal, nadie lo era más que el gremio de la industria del vestido."⁷⁵ The earthquakes exposed their working conditions and the employers' priority to save their machinery rather than search for survivors. Poniowska described the effect on the women: "Del ahora en sangre nació la rabia, el deseo de cambio."⁷⁶ The women joined forces to demand basic insurance payments from their employers as stipulated in Mexican law. Poniowska was so impressed by the movement that she gave all the royalties from the first edition of *Nada, nadie* to the Unión de Costureras.⁷⁷

Other groups joined the seamstresses. Poniowska repeated the slogans that appeared in San Antonio Abad: "Todos se hicieron hermanos en la desgracia luchando contra el desastre, luchando por una causa."⁷⁸ In November 1985, the Coordinadora Unica de Damnificados (CUD), an organisation formed to address the needs of all the victims, staged a march to Los Pinos to demand compensation. Poniowska reported that the 30,000 protesters were accused of being "agitadores profesionales que no tienen derecho de presentarse a presionar al Presidente de la República". During Díaz Ordaz's

presidency both Paz and Monsiváis identified the tendency for those in power to view any form of protest as a personal attack,⁷⁹ evidently this disposition remained.

Campaigner Gabino Fraga explained, "a cualquiera que reclama su legitimo derecho lo tachan de agitador, o de traidor a la patria, o de estar al servicio de una potencia extranjera. Es la historia eterna."⁸⁰ A resident of Tlatelolco, Fraga was all too aware of the historical precedents.

Monsiváis, too, examined the demands for change, citing De la Madrid's denial of the popular will: "Yo no veo en la mayoría del pueblo de México un deseo de cambio fundamental de nuestra estructura política." Monsiváis dismissed this assessment, quoting a survey that voiced substantial criticism for the government's response to the earthquakes.⁸¹ For further evidence of the disparity between those with political power and the people they purported to represent, Monsiváis quoted from De la Madrid's statement of December 1985:

Le confieso que no tengo una respuesta en cuanto al concepto de sociedad civil. [...] ¿Qué es sociedad civil? [...] La mayor parte de los individuos entiende por sociedad civil la parte de la sociedad que no está cumpliendo labores gubernamentales. El gobierno es órgano del Estado y el Estado comprende su población por definición. El Estado lo entiende como la organización política de una sociedad organizada. En consecuencia, no creo que se puede hablar de un divorcio entre Estado y sociedad.⁸²

De la Madrid might close his eyes to what was happening in Mexico, but Monsiváis's view was different: he had personally witnessed the awakening of civil society and observed the general disillusionment with the government. Monsiváis concluded, "una comunidad aprovechó al máximo la infrecuente oportunidad de existir de golpe, y verificó por unos días el alcance de sus poderes".⁸³ Written in 1987, Monsiváis had reflected upon the prevalent attitudes and placed them in a wider context. Far from De

la Madrid's stable relationship between the government and its people, Monsiváis emphasised the divorce between the State and society.

John Kraniauskas marked the earthquakes as beginning "a remarkable proliferation of independent social movements that are radically changing the parameters of politics in Mexico and the relation between state and civil society".⁸⁴ The Unión de Vecinos y Damnificados "19 de Septiembre" was founded on 5 October 1985. The CUD joined forces with the Coordinadora Nacional del Movimiento Urbano Popular (CONAMUP), that had been established in 1981, and the Asamblea de Barrios, created to assist those made homeless by the earthquakes. These groups subsequently adopted the masked champion of the poor and dispossessed, "Superbarrio Gómez".⁸⁵ Like many others, earthquake victim Superbarrio, received no government assistance. A former wrestler, he worked selling chocolate in the Centro Histórico, Mexico City to support his family.⁸⁶ He claimed a supernatural encounter assigned a new role for him: "Había una luz roja y una luz amarilla [...] cerré los ojos, empecé a sentir a mi alrededor un viento [...] muy fuerte. [...] Y entonces escuché una voz que me decía: 'Tú eres Superbarrio, defensor de los inquilinos pobres y azote de los caseros voraces y de las autoridades corruptas.'"⁸⁷ Superbarrio quickly gained popularity, within six months of his first appearance his image could be found alongside portraits of Christ, the Virgin, and saints, and offerings were made to him. In 1987 he was nominated for presidential candidate. Superbarrio explained that his reputation stemmed from his concern for those who live in the numerous impoverished *barrios* of Mexico City: "Soy un aliado en su lucha. Represento una esperanza. [...] A la que puedes ver, oír y tocar. A la que no te va a poner condiciones, sino todo lo contrario. Te va a ayudar a resolver tus problemas."⁸⁸

Marco Rascón of the Asamblea de Barrios illustrated how a masked figure could achieve results that political activists were unable to attain: “[Superbarrio’s] humor enables the government and the homeless to discuss their differences. He’s good for everybody.”⁸⁹ The phenomenon of an anonymous warrior combating evil drew directly upon the popular culture of those Superbarrio sought to defend. Masked heroes, such as the legendary wrestler Santo, had long been represented in film and comic-books.⁹⁰ Like his fictional counterpart, Superman, Superbarrio fought to uphold justice and vanquish the forces of evil against overwhelming odds. As MacLachlan and Beezley stated, “for many [Superbarrio] is a comic book hero come to life”.⁹¹

Raúl Monje stressed the imperative for Superbarrio’s identity to remain hidden: “Si un luchador pierde la máscara, significa que fue derrotado. Si la conserva es señal de triunfo.” Beyond the rules of wrestling, the mask protected the individual and was a means of confusing the opponent. During a demonstration in Guadalajara, the Governor of Jalisco, Enrique Alvarez del Castillo, “con la furia reflejada en su rostro”, stormed onto the platform to remove Superbarrio’s mask. He was stopped by the enthusiastic audience who insisted upon Superbarrio’s anonymity.⁹² Although the authorities were unable to cope with a disguised figure, the crowd was quick to place its trust in one. Able to identify with a nameless, faceless person, Mexicans brought their problems to Superbarrio confident of receiving a sympathetic hearing. He explained, “yo no prometo nada. Pero lucharé para que la gente tenga lo que pide.”⁹³ Cynthia Steele portrayed Superbarrio as an organic intellectual.⁹⁴ Franco noted that as States take less responsibility so independent groups emerge that produce their own organic

intellectuals.⁹⁵ In this case, the popular class trusted Superbarrio to address their issues and concerns; moreover he shared their background.

Monsiváis was among the first to examine the role of Superbarrio. He considered the merits of his growing cult-following: “¿Es positivo o negativo? ¿No tiende a darle a este movimiento un tono frívolo o un carácter pueril? [...] ¿No se requieren ahora símbolos más realistas, por qué un luchador enmascarado, por qué esa atmósfera de historieta para situaciones tan dramáticas?”⁹⁶ Monsiváis concluded that for decades the popular classes had identified with figures from the culture industry: Superbarrio was thus a natural choice for the poor. After analysing the situation, the disguise, the myth, and the man behind them, Monsiváis pledged support for Superbarrio.⁹⁷

Alleviating the anguish: the contribution of Monsiváis and Poniatowska

In *Entrada Libre*, Monsiváis revealed that he saw the situation following the earthquakes in terms of Gramscian theory. He claimed that until 1985 Gramsci's work had been limited to academic circles, whereas only three days after the earthquakes his term “civil society” was in common use.⁹⁸ At the time Monsiváis, and to a lesser extent Poniatowska, alluded to Gramsci and freely used “civil society”, but theoretical debate was less important to them than the imperative to address the victims' needs. Such analysis would have been unnecessary: as Michel Foucault stated, “the masses are ‘at one’ with their reality and have no need for theories of mediation”.⁹⁹ Hence “civil society” was prominent, but “Gramsci” was not. R. Radhakrishnan illustrated the intellectuals' dilemma: Foucault claimed that the masses spoke for themselves, but in so

doing Foucault used his own intellectual formation and thus prevented them from stating their own cases.¹⁰⁰ Monsiváis and Poniawska overcame this paradox: they might be well-versed in the current theoretical thought, and their reactions may have been shaped by these boundaries, but their work was firmly embedded in Mexican reality. They chronicled what was happening and publicised the relief services available, rather than categorising the public's response. Jorge Castañeda praised Monsiváis's contribution:

Monsiváis himself came to personify the grass roots organization of Mexico City's social movements. He also symbolized, through his writings and insistence, the confluence of social movements and cultural renewal. More than anyone, Monsiváis stressed the changes that had taken place - and those that hadn't yet - in the young Mexican middle class. He emphasized the relevance of cultural change, of transformations in everyday life, and the importance of linking the need for a revolution in this sphere to political reform and social change.¹⁰¹

Castañeda saw Monsiváis as a leader, an active participant in the movements he chronicled; moreover Monsiváis placed them in a cultural context. For Castañeda, Monsiváis's skill lay in his manner of interpreting and transmitting the progress of these social movements, giving them broader significance, and making each and every person aware of the need to become part of this process. Through his work in the press, Monsiváis also inspired the new campaigns that were transforming Mexican society.

The majority of Poniawska's informants were poor, "los damnificados de siempre". She praised the role of *La Jornada* in highlighting their ordeal,¹⁰² underlining that the paper had broken with tradition:

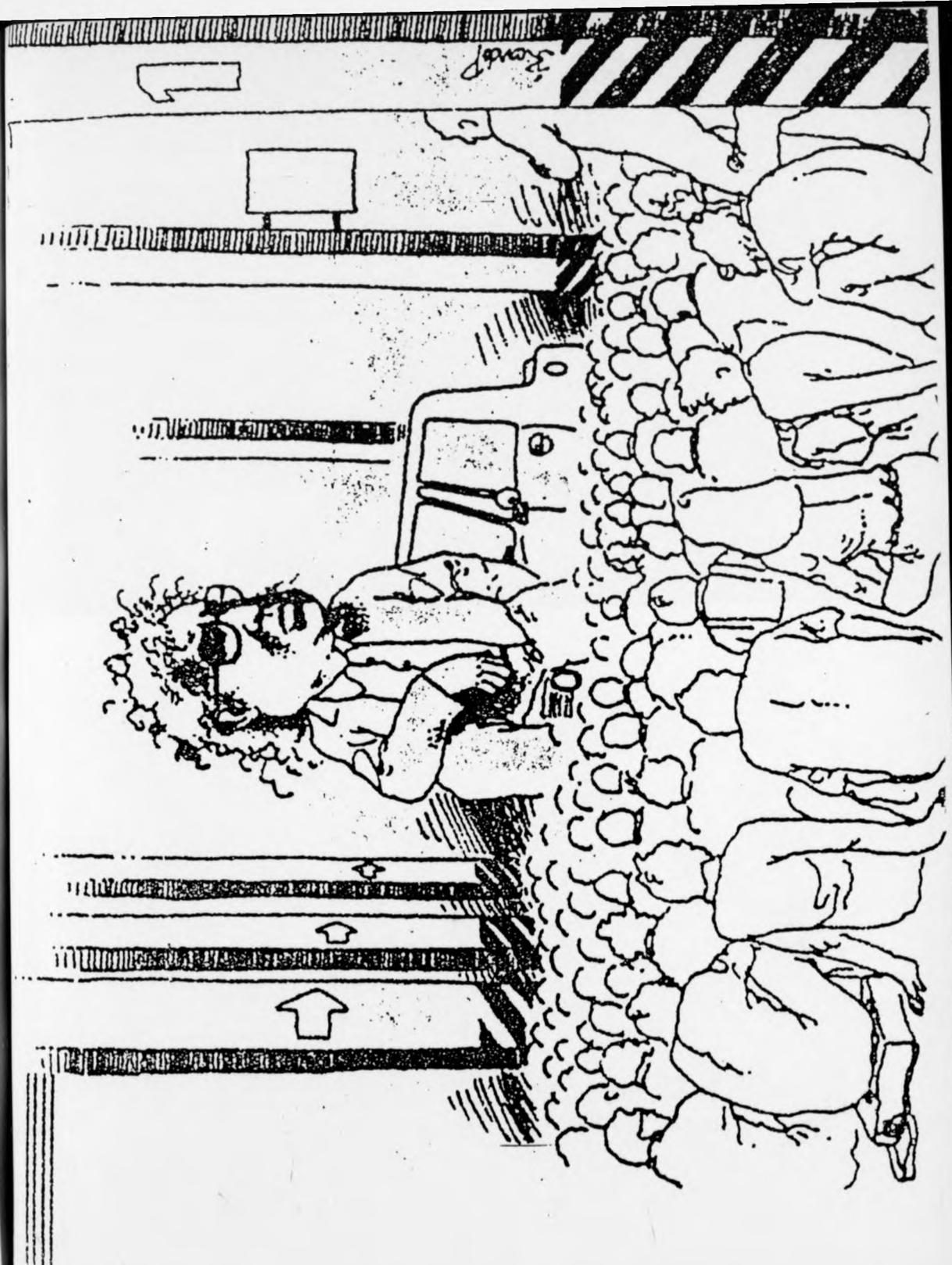
En México siempre se ha intentado sepultar todo, como si en el país nunca pasara nada. Tenemos una horrible tendencia al olvido, [...] tenemos una



tendencia a desvirtuar nuestro pasado, pero creo en nuestra memoria de los hechos está nuestra capacidad de respuesta y nuestra capacidad de salvación.¹⁰³

Without mentioning them, Poniatowska derided the editors of *Novedades* who had refused to publish her articles. Elsewhere, Poniatowska's reconstruction of the pain, the lessons and the many positive aspects revealed by the earthquakes was much acclaimed. Letters of thanks were sent to *La Jornada*; cartoonist Helguera depicted a weary Poniatowska providing comfort in the form of a bouquet of pens.¹⁰⁴ Alicia Trueba stated that amid the dust and devastation Poniatowska managed to bring "lo que es ella misma, una bocanada de aire limpio".¹⁰⁵

The public reaction to *Entrada libre* indicated the appreciation of Monsiváis's concern for the "eternal victims" and their struggle to make themselves heard. Although the earthquakes was just one of several themes in the book, this work most clearly displayed Monsiváis's affection and admiration for the Mexican public. Poniatowska stressed that writing it had not been an easy task: "Me decía Monsiváis que [...] era un libro de veras muy, muy trabajado. [...] Y también es un libro muy doloroso."¹⁰⁶ Approximately 1,500 people attended the launch of *Entrada libre* at the Librería del Sótano, Coyoacán, Mexico City. The meeting was hastily transferred outdoors to accommodate the crowd that included current and former students, and members of the neighbourhood organisations established after the earthquakes. Paco Ignacio Taibo II rationalised their presence: "Vienen a rendir justo homenaje a su cronista. Vienen a saludar al contador de sus historias, al narrador de sus gestas. Son los personajes que vienen a testimoniar su entrañable relación con su autor." Monsiváis, he continued, was "visiblemente emocionado".¹⁰⁷ Through his book and his response to the crowd at its presentation, Monsiváis revealed the depths of his attachment to his public: ties that had



been formed in 1968 and strengthened by years of critical comment. His readers' reaction confirmed that the affection was mutual, people from all sectors of society came to show their appreciation. An anonymous cartoonist depicted Monsiváis with his numerous fans outside the building.¹⁰⁸

In January 1988, Poniatowska stated that the earthquakes had been a significant factor in democratic life; she added that the changes achieved were part of the process begun in 1968.¹⁰⁹ She connected the unsung heroes of 1985 to those who had been involved in the Student Movement: "La misma gente que vi en la cárcel en el 68, encerrada por defender sus ideales políticos, es la misma gente que después vi en el 85, [...] ayudando, organizando, juntando gente. [...] A todos los volví a ver en el terremoto."¹¹⁰ Enrique Krauze recalled, "the city was living through the same phenomenon of affirmations and solidarity as it had in 1968".¹¹¹ 1968 had marked the start of a new relationship between the people and those in power; the earthquakes further shaped its nature. In contrast to the silent terror after October 1968, Mexicans joined forces to voice their discontent: the government was neither representing its people, nor did it understand their concerns. These two flash-points revealed that Mexicans had a voice and at times of national crisis were willing and able to use it. Civil society was alive and well.

Monsiváis noted the popular participation in many areas of public concern, "no sólo en la obtención de espacios de poder, sino en lo relativo a ecología, a derechos de la mujer o los minorías, a los sindicatos, a las universidades. [...] Son avances espectaculares o modestos, pero siempre reales."¹¹² The earthquakes had shaken the foundations of society: "Solía decirse que cualquier periodista mexicano se enfrentaba a

tres tabúes: el ejército, la Virgen de Guadalupe, y el Presidente de la República y su familia. [...] El terremoto también resquebrajó estos "intocables". La gente se ha volcado en críticas. Y éstas han sido publicadas."¹¹³ There was a new attitude: "La gente presionó bárbaramente a las autoridades. El terremoto [...] cambió la relación del pueblo con las autoridades."¹¹⁴ People were no longer afraid to voice their discontent; moreover, there were spaces in the liberal press to publicise such opinions. In 1987, Monsiváis warned that the advancement of civil society would be curbed by the vast resources of the State and the business class: for civil society to succeed, historical barriers had to be dismantled. Nonetheless, he added, an important transformation of attitude had occurred: citizens now believed that they could procure political change; it was no longer a gift bestowed by the president.¹¹⁵ Neither Monsiváis nor Poniatowska mentioned their role in this progression: by articulating the views of those without a voice, they had guided and published this criticism, aiming it directly at the government.

In the aftermath of the earthquakes, Mexican society showed its capacity to act independently of a negligent and corrupt government. Civil society emerged and demanded democracy as a basic right. Although neither Monsiváis nor Poniatowska instigated this public movement, they contributed the full strength of their skills and support as they chronicled the transformation of society, ensuring maximum coverage and working to encourage others to join and to extend it. In different ways 1968 and 1985 were watersheds; both Monsiváis and Poniatowska witnessed and broadcast these critical episodes in the country's social, political and cultural development. Were Mexicans merely responding to specific crises, or did their actions indicate something more profound? The potential of civil society would be tested in the 1988 presidential election.

Notes to chapter four

¹ Carlos Monsiváis, "La solidaridad de la población en realidad fue toma de poder", *Proceso*, No.464, 23 Sept. 1985, p.10. The article is dated 20 September 1985.

² Paul Lawrence Haber, "Earthquake of 1985", in Werner, (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Mexico*, Vol.1, p.423; Meyer and Sherman, *A Concise History of Mexico*, p.685; Elena Poniatowska, *Nada, nadie: Las voces del temblor* (México D.F., 1988), p.110. Haber wrote that figures range from 5,000 to over 20,000 with 10,000 deaths being the most commonly cited. Meyer and Sherman numbered "more than 8,000" deaths. Poniatowska drew attention to a report in the Monterrey daily, *El Porvenir*, which claimed the death toll could be as high as 500,000.

³ Presidencia de la República, *Sobretiro de las razones y las obras: Crónica del sexenio 1982-1988*, Tercer año, (México D.F., 1986), p.496.

⁴ Russell, *Mexico Under Salinas*, p.141.

⁵ Carlos Monsiváis, quoted in Castañeda, *Utopia Unarmed*, p.224.

⁶ Carlos Fuentes, *The Buried Mirror, or Reflections on Spain and the New World*, (London, 1992), p.355.

⁷ Brewster, Interview with Poniatowska.

⁸ Enrique Garay, "Reconstruir es cambiar de rumbo: Octavio Paz", *La Jornada*, No.391, 19 Oct. 1985, p.1.

⁹ Carlos Fuentes, *Cristóbal Nonato*, (México D.F, 1987), pp.48-49.

¹⁰ Brewster, Interview with Poniatowska. In a discussion covering her work over the last thirty years, Poniatowska used the earthquakes as her main point of reference and continually referred to the people she had met through the tragedy.

¹¹ Vega, "Dio permanencia", p.27.

¹² See Monsiváis, "La solidaridad" pp.8-10, 13-15; Carlos Monsiváis, "Los poderes contratacan ante un civil sociedad que rechaza la submisión", *Proceso*, No.465, 30 Sept. 1985, pp.6, 9-12, 15; Carlos Monsiváis, "Impresiones, vivencias, recapitulaciones", *Proceso*, No.466, 7 Oct. 1985, pp.22-25.

¹³ Elena Poniatowska, "Carlos Monsiváis: Las décadas en el espejo", *Nexos*, No.106, Oct. 1986, p.9.

¹⁴ Egan, "Entrevista con Carlos Monsiváis", p.18.

¹⁵ Monsiváis, "La solidaridad", p.13; Carlos Monsiváis, *Entrada libre, crónicas de la sociedad que se organiza*, (México D.F., 1987), pp.15, 17-25. Although Monsiváis from necessity wrote this first article in a short space of time, he chose not to alter it in any way for his book. All his other essays were edited and rearranged.

¹⁶ Monsiváis, "La solidaridad", p.10.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp.14-15.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp.9-10.

¹⁹ Monsiváis, "Los poderes", p.9.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p.10.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p.12.

²² Monsiváis, "Impresiones, vivencias", p.25.

²³ Brewster, interview with Quayson. Quayson stated that to qualify as an organic intellectual one need not belong to the class whose aspirations are addressed, provided those involved can identify with their spokesperson.

²⁴ Monsiváis, "Impresiones, vivencias", p.25.

²⁵ Carlos Monsiváis, "¿Cuántos funcionarios caben en un aplazamiento de respuesta?", *Proceso*, No.469, 28 Oct. 1985, p.12.

²⁶ Monsiváis, *Entrada libre*, p.62.

²⁷ Poniatowska, *Nada, nadie*, especially pp.145-156, 220-238.

²⁸ Monsiváis, "¿Cuántos funcionarios?", p.12.

²⁹ Monsiváis, "Los poderes", p.10.

³⁰ Monsiváis, "¿Cuántos funcionarios?", p.13.

³¹ Carlos Monsiváis, "De la vida en las calles y de la astucia en la televisión", *Proceso*, No.470, 7 Nov. 1985, p.26.

³² Carlos Monsiváis, "Víctima de su vulnerabilidad, la sociedad civil va callando", *Proceso*, No.478, 30 Dec. 1985, p.10.

³³ Monsiváis, *Entrada libre*, pp.62, 13.

³⁴ Steele, "Entrevista: Elena Poniatowska", pp.100-101.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p.101.

³⁶ Brewster, Interview with Poniatowska.

- ³⁷ Ibid. See, Elena Poniatowska, "La tragedia de los desplazados por el terremoto", *Novedades*, No.16075, 1 Oct. 1985, pp.1, 12; Elena Poniatowska, "Invaluable la ayuda juvenil en el rescate", *Novedades*, No.16076, 2 Oct. 1985, pp.1, 16; Elena Poniatowska, "Reavivó el tejido de la ciudad de México", *Novedades*, No.16077, 3 Oct. 1985, p.6; Elena Poniatowska, [N.T.], *Novedades*, No.16081, 7 Oct. 1985, p.6; Elena Poniatowska, [N.T.], *Novedades*, No.16082, 8 Oct. 1985, p.6.
- ³⁸ Poniatowska's articles that were more critical of the government and the attitude of businessmen appeared in *Proceso*. See, Elena Poniatowska, "A mi familia no la mató el sismo, la mató el fraude y la corrupción que auspicia el gobierno", *Proceso*, No.470, 4 Nov. 1985, pp.20-23; Elena Poniatowska, "La dirigente Evangelina Corona: 'Como no sabemos nada, creíamos que los patronos eran buenos'", *Proceso*, No.473, 25 Nov. 1985, pp.17-19.
- ³⁹ Steele, "Entrevista: Elena Poniatowska", p.103.
- ⁴⁰ Antonio Lazcano Araujo, "Las voces del temblor", *La Jornada*, No.1454, 1 Oct. 1988, de los libros, p.6.
- ⁴¹ Steele, "Entrevista: Elena Poniatowska", p.104.
- ⁴² Alicia Trueba, "La odisea de *Nada, nadie*", *La Jornada*, No.1454, 1 Oct. 1988, de los libros, p.3.
- ⁴³ Ibid., p.3.
- ⁴⁴ Elena Poniatowska, "*Nada, nadie, las voces del temblor*", *La Jornada*, No.1441, 18 Sept. 1988, p.15.
- ⁴⁵ Elena Poniatowska, "El futuro, una gran interrogante: Hablar de la tragedia: una forma de terapia", *La Jornada*, No.386, 14 Oct. 1985, p.32.
- ⁴⁶ García Flores, "Diálogo con Elena Poniatowska", p.vii.
- ⁴⁷ Poniatowska, "El futuro, una gran interrogante", p.17.
- ⁴⁸ Elena Poniatowska, "Voces del edificio Nuevo León", *La Jornada*, No.383, 11 Oct. 1985, p.17.
- ⁴⁹ Elena Poniatowska, "Voy a seguir caminando por la esperanza de mi Ricardito: Una buena razón para Salomón Reyes", *La Jornada*, No.389, 17 Oct. 1985, p.23.
- ⁵⁰ That Poniatowska did not insist upon the details of her endeavours to coordinate rescue and relief programmes being included in the book substantiates the case that she wanted to minimise her role. When interviewed about the aftermath of the earthquakes, she did not mention this aspect of her work. Only by examining of the press in 1985 is such detail revealed.
- ⁵¹ Adriano Maldivo, "Elena Poniatowska, Cristina Pacheco y Carlos Monsiváis comentan sobre los libros que escribieron entonces", *La Jornada*, No.3963, 19 Sept. 1995.
- ⁵² Poniatowska, *Nada, nadie*, p.82; Elena Poniatowska, "¿Qué más se va a acordar?", *La Jornada*, No.380, 8 Oct. 1985, p.32.
- ⁵³ Poniatowska, *Nada, nadie*, p.120; Elena Poniatowska, "Me senté a tirar piedras; me sentía incapacitado", *La Jornada*, No.412, 10 Nov. 1985, p.28.
- ⁵⁴ Brewster, Interview with Poniatowska.
- ⁵⁵ Monsiváis, *Entrada libre*, p.63.
- ⁵⁶ Poniatowska, *Nada, nadie*, p.183; Elena Poniatowska, "El terremoto dio origen a una espontánea movilización", *La Jornada*, No.431, 29 Nov. 1985, pp.32, 24.
- ⁵⁷ Poniatowska, *Nada, nadie*, p.209; Elena Poniatowska, "En los albergues: titiriteros, cantantes, teatreros, pintores", *La Jornada*, No.416, 13 Nov. 1985, p.10.
- ⁵⁸ Poniatowska, *Nada, nadie*, p.64.
- ⁵⁹ Ibid., p.241; Elena Poniatowska, "Es indispensable la formación de brigadas de salvamento permanentes", *La Jornada*, No.399, 27 Oct. 1985, p.20. In the newspaper article, Poniatowska added that three patrols continually harassed the volunteers. She provided their identification numbers.
- ⁶⁰ Franco, "Going Public", p.72.
- ⁶¹ Ibid., p.72.
- ⁶² Poniatowska, *Nada, nadie*, pp.24, 69, 79-80; Poniatowska, "¿Qué más se va a acordar?", p.32.
- ⁶³ Brewster, Interview with Poniatowska.
- ⁶⁴ Poniatowska, *Nada, nadie*, p.192; Elena Poniatowska, "Todo se hizo por voluntad propia", *La Jornada*, No.385, 13 Oct. 1985, p.20.
- ⁶⁵ Brewster, Interview with Poniatowska.
- ⁶⁶ Poniatowska, *Nada, nadie*, pp.41, 67; Elena Poniatowska, "De tanto amor que he puesto en esto, ya todo el mundo me quiere", *La Jornada*, No.387, 15 Oct. 1985, p.23.
- ⁶⁷ Poniatowska, *Nada, nadie*, p.196.
- ⁶⁸ Poniatowska, "*Nada, nadie*", p.15. Poniatowska's remarks had additional meaning given the prevailing atmosphere in Mexico following the 1988 presidential election.
- ⁶⁹ Brewster, Interview with Poniatowska.
- ⁷⁰ Poniatowska, *Nada, nadie*, pp.119-120; Poniatowska, "Me senté a tirar piedras", p.28.

- ⁷¹ Poniatowska, *Nada, nadie*, p.129; Elena Poniatowska, "Nos tratan como reos de alta traición", *La Jornada*, No.413, 11 Nov. 1985, p.15.
- ⁷² Poniatowska, *Nada, nadie*, p.219-220; Elena Poniatowska, "Ineptitud, corrupción, claves en la caída del Nuevo León", *La Jornada*, No.404, 1 Nov. 1985, pp.32, 4.
- ⁷³ Monsiváis, *Entrada libre*, p.122; Carlos Monsiváis, "Organizaciones populares y resistencia a su acción", *Proceso*, No.471, 11 Nov. 1985, p.15.
- ⁷⁴ Armando Ponce, "Elena Poniatowska: 'Sin el impulso vital de las mujeres, este país se caería en pedazos'", *Proceso*, No.965, 1 May 1995, p.66.
- ⁷⁵ Poniatowska, *Nada, nadie*, p.145; Elena Poniatowska, "El sismo reveló la explotación de las trabajadoras", *La Jornada*, No.428, 26 Nov. 1985, p.32.
- ⁷⁶ Poniatowska, *Nada, nadie*, p.222; Poniatowska, "La dirigente Evangelina", p.18.
- ⁷⁷ Patricia Vega, "Poniatowska: ante el sismo, escribir no servía para nada", *La Jornada*, No.1438, 14 Sept. 1988, p.23. Her percentage of each subsequent reprinting would be donated to different victims' causes. Speaking at the time of the book's launch, Poniatowska did not specify which would benefit: "¡hay tantos a quienes ayudar!". In her many dedications at the start of the book, Poniatowska stressed, "las regalías de *Nada, nadie* son para los damnificados".
- ⁷⁸ Poniatowska, *Nada, nadie*, p.230; Elena Poniatowska, "Son nuestros cuerpos, los de nuestra gente", *La Jornada*, No.409, 6 Nov. 1985, p.32.
- ⁷⁹ Paz, *Posdata*, p.54; Monsiváis, "La represión como ideología", p.x.
- ⁸⁰ Poniatowska, *Nada, nadie*, p.266; Elena Poniatowska, "La vida de miles de capitalinos todavía permanece trastornada", *La Jornada*, No.423, 21 Nov. 1985, p.24.
- ⁸¹ Monsiváis, *Entrada libre*, pp.64-65. The survey was taken from *La Jornada*, 30 Oct. 1985. Over half those who took part found fault with the government's reaction. Of those interviewed, 50% judged that the government had been slow to enact rescue programmes; 57% said that the collective authorities did less than expected; 69% stated that the regime had not properly organised the spontaneous help of the people; and 75% claimed that the government had been unprepared for what had happened.
- ⁸² President De la Madrid to Regino Díaz Redondo, editor of *Excelsior*, 8 Dec. 1985, quoted by Monsiváis, *Entrada libre*, p.80. Just how well De la Madrid and the PRI understood the Mexican people would be tested in the 1988 presidential election.
- ⁸³ *Ibid.*, p.81.
- ⁸⁴ Kraniauskas, *Mexican Postcards*, p.xiv.
- ⁸⁵ Carr, "Mexico: The Perils of Unity", pp.85-86.
- ⁸⁶ Raúl Monje, "Superbarrio crece y salva su máscara de arremetidas de funcionarios", *Proceso*, No.579, 7 Dec. 1987, p.28.
- ⁸⁷ Mauricio-José Schwarz, *Todos somos Superbarrio*, (México D.F., 1994), pp.25-26.
- ⁸⁸ Monje, "Superbarrio", p.28.
- ⁸⁹ Quoted in MacLachlan and Beezley, *El Gran Pueblo*, pp.410, 412. As discussed in chapter six, such sentiments would be repeated seven years later describing another masked hero, Subcomandante Marcos. Among Superbarrio's achievements, MacLachlan and Beezley list the building or renovation of two million budget government housing units; the avoidance of over 1,200 evictions, and the attainment of reasonable rent rates and low-interest home loans.
- ⁹⁰ For a description of Santo's life, work and popular image see, Nelson Carro, *El cine de luchadores*, (México D.F., 1984).
- ⁹¹ MacLachlan and Beezley, *El Gran Pueblo*, p.411.
- ⁹² Monje, "Superbarrio", p.28. A similar scene would be repeated in August 1994 at the Zapatista convention, Chiapas: Subcomandante Marcos offered to remove his mask; the crowd begged him not to. See, Carlos Monsiváis, "Crónica de una Convención (que no fue tanto) y de un acontecimiento muy significativo", *Proceso*, No.928, 15 Aug. 1994, p.31.
- ⁹³ Monje, "Superbarrio", p.29.
- ⁹⁴ Steele, *Politics, Gender, and the Mexican Novel*, p.149.
- ⁹⁵ Franco, "Going Public", pp.66-69.
- ⁹⁶ Carlos Monsiváis, "En el Zócalo, la protesta diversificia formas; la sordera, respuesta oficial", *Proceso*, No.560, 27 July 1987, p.21.
- ⁹⁷ As would be the case with Subcomandante Marcos, Monsiváis did not give immediate, unconditional approval of fashionable popular figures, he preferred to assess all the facts and make an informed assessment.
- ⁹⁸ Monsiváis, *Entrada libre*, pp.78-79.
- ⁹⁹ Foucault quoted in Radhakrishnan, "Toward an Effective Intellectual", p.72.
- ¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p.74.

- ¹⁰¹ Castañeda, *Utopia Unarmed*, p.225
- ¹⁰² Poniatowska, *Nada, nadie*, p.306; Elena Poniatowska, "Combatir el olvido", *La Jornada*, No.432, 30 Nov. 1985, p.19.
- ¹⁰³ Vega, "Celebró los 20 años /II", p.39.
- ¹⁰⁴ These were published by *La Jornada* in December 1985. See in particular, José Lavanderos Yáñez, "Reconocimiento al trabajo de Elena Poniatowska", *La Jornada*, No.440, 8 Dec. 1985, p.8. Lavanderos Yáñez also thanked *La Jornada* for having the courage to print her articles. Helguera, "Combatir el olvido", *La Jornada*, No.440, 8 Dec. 1985, p.8.
- ¹⁰⁵ Trueba, "La odisea de *Nada, nadie*", p.3. Not everyone praised Poniatowska's work: in October 1988, Antonio Martín del Campo, director of a government data processing centre, contended comments in an article dated 23 November 1985, that depicted him as a callous man who had made no effort to help in rescue operations. Del Campo explained that he did not complain at the time as he was busy with restoration work, and asked Poniatowska to rectify the remarks in subsequent editions of *Nada, nadie*. In reply, Poniatowska stated that her informants may not have been completely accurate and agreed to remove the offending passages. By the third edition of *Nada, nadie*, all references to del Campo had gone. See, Antonio Martín del Campo, "A quién se le da la voz /I", *La Jornada*, No.1465, 12 Oct. 1988, p.13; Antonio Martín del Campo, "A quién se le da la voz /II", *La Jornada*, No.1466, 13 Oct. 1988, p.9; Antonio Martín del Campo, "A quién se le da la voz /III", *La Jornada*, No.1467, 14 Oct. 1988, p.25; Poniatowska, "Respuesta a Antonio Martín", p.2.
- ¹⁰⁶ Steele, "Entrevista a Elena Poniatowska", p.104.
- ¹⁰⁷ Paco Ignacio Taibo II, "Carlos Monsiváis: El encuentro del cronista y sus personajes en un estacionamiento", *La Cultura en México*, No.1355, 23 March 1988, p.41.
- ¹⁰⁸ [N.A.], "Carlos Monsiváis", *La Cultura en México*, No.1355, 23 March 1988, p.41.
- ¹⁰⁹ H.B., "Entrevista con Elena Poniatowska", *Nexos*, No.121, Jan. 1988, p.102.
- ¹¹⁰ Vega, "Celebró los 20 años /II", p.39.
- ¹¹¹ Krauze, *Mexico*, p.766.
- ¹¹² Carlos Monsiváis, "Foro de *Nexos*: La reforma democrática", *Nexos*, No.117, Sept. 1987, p.30.
- ¹¹³ Poniatowska, *Nada, nadie*, p.184; Elena Poniatowska, "El terremoto dio origen", p.24.
- ¹¹⁴ H.B., "Entrevista", p.102.
- ¹¹⁵ Monsiváis, *Entrada libre*, pp.13, 14; Carlos Monsiváis, "Lo marginal en el centro", *La Jornada Semanal*, No.168, 6 Dec. 1987, p.12.

5. The presidential election of 1988: The response of civil society

En México la defensa de la democracia es la defensa de la herencia de Hidalgo, Morelos, Juárez y Madero. Octavio Paz, December 1986.¹

El "sistema" mexicano es por esencia antidemocrático al negar la posibilidad de la alternancia. Luis Javier Garrido, Instituto de Investigaciones Sociales de la UNAM, 1987.²

Una verdadera extensión de la democracia sólo podrá venir después de un cambio profundo del sistema electoral y después de la liquidación de los mecanismos cuasi-institucionales del fraude. Roger Bartra, 1987.³

Jorge Castañeda described the crowd at the presentation of Monsiváis's *Entrada libre* as, "a harbinger of a new earthquake beginning to shake Mexico City; the political effervescence coalescing around left-wing candidate, Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas".⁴

Cárdenas had solid political credentials: the son of ex-President Lázaro Cárdenas and former governor of Michoacán had been a member of the PRI for twenty years. In 1985 Cárdenas, together with Porfirio Muñoz Ledo, challenged the non-democratic presidential candidate selection process and put forward a series of measures aimed at reforming the PRI.⁵ The proposals were discarded and in 1987 Cárdenas resigned from the party.

In the run up to the election, Monsiváis returned to his customary satire, portraying how the earthquakes changed Mexican attitudes:

Si lo ocurrido en septiembre de 1985 no es prueba suficiente de la necesidad de democratizar a la capital, contiene entonces por lo menos, que elijamos por voto directo a nuestras catástrofes, ya que no podemos elegir a nuestros gobernantes, vayamos a las urnas para designar a nuestras variantes del apocalipsis.⁶

Behind the derisive vision of Mexico's future lay an important message: the *capitalinos'* response to the crisis proved their political maturity. Democracy, Monsiváis insisted, was a citizen's right. In 1987 he stressed the difference between public aspirations and government action: "En México uno tiene que recurrir cada vez más a la legalidad, porque el gobierno recurre cada vez más a la ilegalidad, es evidente que el gobierno no hace caso de nada de lo que la población demanda."⁷ Monsiváis recommended using legitimate channels to remove a government that had neither a popular nor a judicial mandate. The obvious opportunity was the forthcoming presidential election, and Monsiváis encouraged his readers to test their strength.

Noting a general tendency for writers to praise the ruling party, Luis Javier Garrido singled out Monsiváis as independent of the PRI and willing to make critical judgements.⁸ Garrido highlighted the growing ties between the PRI candidate, Carlos Salinas de Gortari, and many members of the intellectual community. Salinas cultivated leading cultural figures to bolster his campaign. Links with Paz were evident in 1974 when Salinas wrote an article for *Plural* stressing the need for the government to harness the potential of the Mexican people.⁹ In early 1988, led by the *Vuelta* group, the intellectual community sought Salinas's support for the creation of a national council for the Arts, a proposal that had been put before successive presidents since 1975.¹⁰ Paz emphasised that an independent committee would decide who received the grants, they would not be bestowed by the State: "Así, no habrá tiranos ni dictadores."¹¹ Salinas's interest in such a scheme was welcomed by many, including the *Nexos* group. At a meeting on the first day of his presidential campaign, Salinas sat between Enrique Krauze of *Vuelta*, and *Nexos* editor, Héctor Aguilar Camín. Salinas spoke of the importance of culture and the need to create a national fund for the Arts that was

independent of central administration. Federico Campbell reported that Salinas's diction was, "como un intelectual más, en un tono académico", and that he used "conceptos y frases parecidos a las del [Aguilar Camín]". Here was a candidate who appeared to include and promote intellectuals. Campbell listed those who had hitherto kept their distance from those in power; among them Fuentes, Monsiváis, Paz and Poniatowska. He ominously added, "y no se sabe que lo vayan a hacer en el futuro".¹²

Monsiváis, meanwhile, worked to ensure that Mexicans attained the political ambitions they had expressed after the earthquakes. As an example of popular participation, he examined the campaign to prevent the installation of a nuclear power station at Laguna Verde, Veracruz, a movement that had much intellectual support.¹³ He registered that President De la Madrid, seconded by Salinas, decried the public protests as "desobediencia civil". Monsiváis warned that in this incident Salinas was far from conciliatory towards intellectuals, and stressed the probability of electoral fraud in the forthcoming elections was, "para muchos una certidumbre."¹⁴ He claimed that the PRI was conducting a smear campaign against Cárdenas to counter his increasing popularity. Cárdenas was accused of disloyalty and of exploiting his father's reputation.¹⁵

Monsiváis compared Cárdenas's and Salinas's differing interpretations of democracy: Salinas proclaimed, "en el ámbito electoral ampliar la democracia no quiere decir ceder el poder"; whereas Cárdenas stated, "aquí hay pluralidad y en esta unidad cabemos todos. No pretendamos ganar votos, pretendamos ganar *con* votos y vamos a ganar." Salinas's vision of democracy was one that dismissed a possible transfer of power; Cárdenas would not dupe the electorate, but with its consent would win the

presidency. Typically, Monsiváis made no direct comment allowing the candidates' words to speak for themselves. He then drew attention to Cárdenas's growing renown: on the fiftieth anniversary of the nationalisation of the petrol industry, one of his father's most celebrated achievements, Cárdenas's supporters filled the Zócalo. Monsiváis recorded, "es emocionante recobrar el país que allí estaba y que me había ocultado mi pesimismo. De veras que es magnífico."¹⁶ Here Monsiváis emphasised both Cárdenas's heritage and the hope for a better future he inspired. He was also encouraging public opinion in Cárdenas's favour: Cárdenas may draw upon his past, but he also looked forward. Monsiváis, who had always maintained a critical distance from those in power, appeared to be strongly attached to Cárdenas.

Two months later, Monsiváis contemplated Cárdenas's appeal: "Si *carisma* es capacidad de convocatoria, retención del ánimo del auditorio, aura inequívoca que vuelve inolvidable aun el mitin más soporífero, [...] Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas es, sin duda, carismático." On this occasion, Cárdenas was addressing a crowd of over 50,000 at the Politécnico, Mexico City. Monsiváis described the expectant atmosphere: "Cuauhtémoc representa en efecto, la esperanza, [...] una alternidad creíble [...] la garantía de espacios democráticos."¹⁷ Using his position as a journalist to voice his own hopes, Monsiváis stressed that Cárdenas was the means through which democratic change could be achieved without violent upheaval.

In June 1988, just one month before the election, the Partido Mexicano Socialista (PMS) candidate, former student leader Heberto Castillo, joined forces with Cárdenas. There were already strong links between them: Lázaro Cárdenas had assisted Castillo's wife and children while Castillo was in hiding from October 1968 until his

Se pone cardiaco

Por Naranjo



imprisonment in May 1969.¹⁸ Like Cárdenas, Castillo had impressive political qualifications: on his release from Lecumberri, Castillo refused to follow many of his *compañeros* into exile stating, “mi lucha está aquí”. He declined Echeverría’s assistance to create a political party, forming instead the PST.¹⁹ In 1976 Poniatowska noted that the “puro e intocable” Castillo had rejected a comfortable life, with a good salary: “Ha preferido dedicarse a los demás. [...] Y quizá no hay nada más noble que responder al llamado de los pobres y de las necesidades.”²⁰ Castillo viewed the forthcoming election as the culmination of his political struggle, fulfilling the hopes and expectations of the Student Movement. In January 1988, he stated: “Debo cuidar que estén vivas las semillas de los que desaparecieron en el 68; si no dan hoy sus frutos, los darán mañana. [...] Lo importante de la lucha no es venir a protestar, sino cambiar las cosas.”²¹ Change was indeed Castillo’s priority: when joining forces with Cárdenas, he proposed that the latter should stand for president.²² Castillo was realistic: as PMS candidate he would not have won the election; whereas Cárdenas had a feasible chance of victory. Together they formed a strong presidential challenge. The partnership was greeted by Cárdenas as “un triunfo del pueblo y de la democracia de nuestro país”.²³ The Left temporarily joined forces and the neocardenismo movement was formed.²⁴ As Naranjo’s cartoon shows, this phenomenon caused the PRI considerable consternation.²⁵

At this vital stage, Krauze attacked Fuentes in an article published simultaneously in *Vuelta* and *The New Republic*. Ostensibly a criticism of Fuentes’s recently published book, *Myself With Others*, Krauze launched into a bitter denunciation of the writer and his work, resurrecting issues such as Fuentes’s relationship with Echeverría, and the Nicaraguan Revolution.²⁶ Krauze was particularly opposed to Fuentes’s silence following *Jueves de Corpus* and the *Excelsior* coup. Why did Krauze

launch such an attack, and was the timing coincidental? From the outset doubt was cast over the 'real' author: although Paz repeatedly denied any involvement, many believed that he was behind the offensive.²⁷ Antonio Marquet noted it began in the first person singular, then moved to the plural "we". Marquet inferred that Krauze was thus speaking for the whole *Vuelta* team.²⁸ Krauze maintained that Paz did not want to publish it; only when Krauze threatened to resign did Paz yield, a decision that caused Paz much pain.²⁹ If this were the case, it questions who was the editor of *Vuelta*. In 1996 Paz said that he regretted Krauze's essay and had reluctantly printed it to respect freedom of expression.³⁰ Whoever was behind it, the article effectively divided intellectuals into those sympathetic towards Fuentes and those who followed Paz, and abruptly ended any pretence of friendly relations between them. In 1990 Krauze stood by his remarks, but regretted their consequence: "La fructífera amistad entre Paz y Fuentes no sólo fue importante en la vida de ambos, sino en la literatura mexicana."³¹

In reaction to "La comedia mexicana", César Alberto Linares praised Krauze's intelligent judgement, asserting that Fuentes created the impression of being a double spy (for Cuba and the United States). If this were the case, Linares reasoned, "pronto será nombrado Premio Nobel de Literatura, como el caso de García Márquez".³² While Linares's comments are by no means judicious, he raised an important issue: Fuentes was deemed by many to be a candidate for the Nobel Prize, an award long coveted by Paz. As Manuel Camposeco pointed out, Fuentes had recently received the distinguished Spanish Cervantes Prize, and thus joined the ranks of Nobel contestants. Camposeco believed that Krauze's "campaña de desprestigio" against Fuentes was designed to put Paz back into the limelight.³³

Questions of its origins and wider motivations notwithstanding, the dispute drew the attention of the intellectual community and that of the cultural press away from the imminent election. Was it a deliberate ploy by Krauze, who had been seated at Salinas's right-hand side during his presidential campaign? The political views of intellectuals were of increased importance in the run up to the election, especially one that was so strongly contested. Although Paz had not yet revealed his political colours, Krauze appeared to favour the PRI candidate. In June 1988, dismissing a victory for the Cárdenas/ Castillo pact, Krauze predicted: "el sistema político mexicano será destruído, desde sus entrañas por la generación priísta del 68 que en diciembre, con Carlos Salinas de Gortari al frente, asumirá el poder". Krauze voiced concern about the possibility of violence in the event of electoral fraud, as had been the case immediately preceding the Revolution: "Ojalá México no tenga que pagar, nuevamente, una cuota de sangre para avanzar hacia la democracia."³⁴ Was Krauze alarmed by the implications of a change of government? Krauze claimed that Salinas would transform the PRI by destroying its repressive aspects. Did he fear that anything other than a clear, legitimate victory for Salinas would lead to bloodshed? Was Krauze afraid that the intellectual community might rally to the Cárdenas/ Castillo cause and thus weaken Salinas's cause?

There may not be one single explanation for Krauze's attack on Fuentes: as a supporter of Salinas, a staunch ally of Paz, who apparently despised Fuentes, Krauze's onslaught could serve many purposes. Whatever the intention, the article did overshadow the election. Its publication in the United States coincided with a visit by Krauze to Washington. US attention was diverted from the Mexican political situation to rumours of a rift between Paz and Fuentes.³⁵ Although Fuentes himself did not reply,

many leapt to his defence.³⁶ The debate spread rapidly through all sections of the Mexican press where it remained for several months, and had repercussions for the next four years.

Monsiváis was one of the few who refused to be drawn into the argument: his concern was to prevent electoral fraud. Like Krauze, he was under no illusions that a transfer of power would be peaceful:

Si hay fraude como todo parece indicar, se va a caer en una fuerte ingobernabilidad sicológica, porque la ya tan precaria credibilidad del gobierno y el absoluta falta de crédito del PRI se van a encontrar con una resistencia ciudadana, que [...identifico] con la exigencia de justicia, legalidad, honradez política y honradez administrativa. [...] Si hay fraude retrocederemos 50 años. Por eso no debemos permitir el fraude³⁷

Moreover, he added, "cualquier reclamación de derechos es una llamada a la violencia según el PRI". As in 1968 and 1985, those who tried to claim their legitimate rights were deemed to be agitators or traitors.³⁸ To counter government claims that a change of governing party would provoke violence, Monsiváis stressed that alteration of power was a natural democratic process. He nonetheless anticipated a PRI victory, but believed its traditional large winning margin would be significantly reduced. For Monsiváis, democracy was "que el poder está compartido en función de la decisión de los ciudadanos".³⁹ Mexicans should build upon the efforts of the past and determine the future democratic course.

In the final countdown to the election, Monsiváis strongly promoted Cárdenas. At the presentation of Porfirio Muñoz Ledo's autobiography, *Compromisos*, Monsiváis

stated that the book proved the PRI was incapable of self-modification. Monsiváis, however, exonerated former party members who had worked to achieve change:

No culpo por supuesto a Muñoz Ledo por no renunciar en 1968. (El mismo dice: "Hice todo lo que pude para evitar la violencia; me esforcé muchísimo dentro mis posibilidades".) [...] Acepto en última instancia las razones profundas de ambas posiciones, las de quienes sólo esperábamos del Sistema la perpetuación del autoritarismo con mínimas concesiones, y las de quienes aguardaban las reformas internas.⁴⁰

This was a considerable concession: Muñoz Ledo had been a member of the ruling party at the time of the Tlatelolco massacre, as had Cárdenas; neither had made an official protest.

In distancing Muñoz Ledo and Cárdenas from involvement in the crushing of the Student Movement, Monsiváis sent out a strong signal: vote for Cárdenas. To dissuade those who still believed the PRI could be reformed, Monsiváis emphasised "la imposibilidad de cambio del PRI". As if to convince those on the Left, Monsiváis admitted that he had initially been wary of supporting a former member of the governing party, but that after much deliberation he believed Cárdenas represented "el genuino centro-izquierda de que tan necesitados estábamos". In the interests of democratic change, Monsiváis endorsed Cárdenas. He was not alone, Monsiváis stressed Cárdenas's rapidly increasing popularity: in August 1987 Cárdenas had around 200 supporters; less than a year later, opinion polls placed him second in the presidential stakes. Neocardenismo, Monsiváis added, "ha impulsado de modo considerable el anhelo democratizador".⁴¹ Days before the election, Monsiváis could not have been more emphatic in his support. Immediately after the ballot Monsiváis was pictured alongside Cárdenas, they appeared relaxed and confident.⁴²

Alterations and altercations: the 1988 election result

- *¿Se cayó el sistema?*

- *No: se calló.* Popular saying, July 1988.⁴³

Cárdenas voted for Superbarrio. Monsiváis commented that the gesture would be reported as “blasphemous”, but explained its importance:

El voto por *Superbarrio* es, sobre todo, un voto por un elemento central del neocardenismo, los movimientos sociales que se extienden por colonias populares, barriadas, centros de estudio, y los estados de ánimo y la voluntad de intervenir de millones de personas recelosas o hartas de los partidos políticos.

In neocardenismo, Monsiváis saw the fulfilment of years of social movements. He quoted the reaction of an unnamed official at a voting booth: “Por primera vez en mi vida me sentí integrado a una mayoría específica, [...] una mayoría ganadora.”⁴⁴ Early results supported these convictions. Froylán López Narváez stated that on 8 July there was a “creencia generalizada” that Cárdenas had won: in twenty-one districts of Mexico City he had 58.28 per cent of the vote, Salinas 28.36 per cent and the Partido de Acción Nacional (PAN) candidate, Manuel Clouthier, 19.08 per cent.⁴⁵ On 10 July it was announced that the Mexican electoral computing system had “crashed”. After a tense three days of rumour and speculation, Salinas was proclaimed the winner.⁴⁶ In an analysis published in 1997, Krauze commented: “an unexplained (and inexplicable) computer glitch was conjured out of the air, so that time could be gained to manipulate the results electronically”. Krauze remarked that once Salinas was secure as president he ordered the records of the election to be burned. He added, “it is hard to believe that they did not contain the evidence of his defeat”. These observations are in contrast to the silence maintained by Krauze and the majority of intellectuals at the time.⁴⁷

Although the opposition was unwilling to accept the amended results and accused the PRI of flagrant fraud, the machinery of power worked against it. The smear campaign against Cárdenas intensified. To weaken the support of popular organisations, the PRI-controlled Ejecutivo Nacional de la Confederación Nacional de Organizaciones Populares issued a declaration claiming that Cárdenas had made false accusations about the election results. It explained that the Mexican people had shown their desire for modernisation through a political system that was increasingly plural and democratic. The document concluded that Cárdenas's calls of fraud would not convince the public.⁴⁸

Many writers were uneasy about the election result. Héctor Aguilar Camín maintained that the procedure fostered much dissatisfaction.⁴⁹ Jaime Sánchez Susarrey stated the ballot proved that the majority of Mexicans wanted a peaceful transition to a democratic regime. Referring to the charges of fraud, he added, "la sospecha sobre la ilegitimidad del proceso electoral constituye el pecado original de la próxima administración; y este pecado sólo se podrá lavar en la pila bautismal de la democracia". Writing in *Vuelta*, Sánchez Susarrey acknowledged the deception, but claimed that democracy would ultimately be victorious.⁵⁰

This attitude reflected Paz's opinion. Paz declined to name the candidate for whom he had voted. As Mexicans awaited the election result, Paz reviewed recent political history:

Creo [...] que ha habido una evolución gradual muy grande en el sistema político mexicano, que empezó [...] con la rebelión de la clase media estudiantil, continuó con la apertura del señor Luis Echeverría, de alguna manera la política del señor López Portillo, y ahora con este paso, mucho

más importante, hacia la democracia. [...] El país está destinado a convertirse en una democracia moderna, pluralística, y esto con las implicaciones de orden social, cultural y económico que lleva consigo la democracia moderna.⁵¹

Paz linked what he believed to be the impending fulfilment of the democratic dream to the Student Movement. For Paz, it had been achieved within the apparatus of the PRI and could be traced through the presidencies of Echeverría and López Portillo. Paz's attitude had clearly been considerably revised. There was no mention of Echeverría's part in the *Excelsior* Coup and, although he had given some endorsement for López Portillo's policies, Paz had previously claimed that widespread corruption condemned such projects to disaster.⁵² Would Paz's optimism be dampened following the election's highly contentious outcome?

Paz was satisfied that democracy prevailed; indeed, he congratulated Salinas on his victory before the final count was announced. Praising "la actitud inteligente y generosa" of Salinas, Paz added that the opposition parties should provide "pruebas fehacientes" of the alleged fraud. For Paz, the president-elect represented "un cambio de actitud fundamental en el partido gobernante". For proof, Paz cited Salinas's recognition of the end of single-party politics in Mexico and the "avance importante" of the opposition shown by its substantial electoral gains. Moreover, and it is stressed these remarks were made before the official figures were revealed, Paz complimented Cárdenas's high percentage of the vote. Disclosing his distance from the desires of the Mexican public, Paz attributed this, "quizás a la carga histórica de su apellido".⁵³ Did Paz have inside information about the eventual outcome, or merely want to persuade the public to accept the inevitable continuation of the PRI rule? It is fitting that Paz's comments, seen by many as a transformation of attitude, appeared in *Excelsior*, the

paper from which Paz had withdrawn so publicly in 1976, and that itself had undergone a change of political affiliation.

On 16 July 1988 around 300,000 people marched to the Zócalo in support of Cárdenas. Monsiváis described the scene as “la concentración *espontánea* más grande en la historia del Zócalo”. He emphasised that the crowd included all sectors of society; some belonged to groups, but the majority were individuals.⁵⁴ The vast assembly appointed Cárdenas president-elect. Cárdenas pledged faith in the Constitution, called for collective unity against the system’s opposition to change, and promised eventual victory. Rather than crush such opposition, the government remained passive allowing passions to burn themselves out; critical cartoons such as those of El Fisgón and Naranjo, were permitted in the press.⁵⁵ As time passed, however, instructions were given to cartoonists: “no more bald heads and big ears”.⁵⁶

As occurred twenty years earlier, protests continued throughout the summer of 1988. In an unprecedented act, President De la Madrid was interrupted during his last address to the nation. PMS and Partido Popular Socialista (PPS) members heckled him; PAN and Cárdenas supporters chanted fraud. Muñoz Ledo directly confronted De la Madrid asking him to respect the popular will, and accused members of the CTM of betraying the workers. Muñoz Ledo left the scene taking 143 politicians with him. Monsiváis observed, “la salida [...fue] magnífica o desastrosa según del lado de la mentada de madre en que uno se encuentre”. With undisguised satisfaction, Monsiváis concluded that afterwards no-one commented on the President’s speech, all attention was upon Muñoz Ledo’s “éxodo”.⁵⁷ What should have been a celebration of De la Madrid’s period of office was transformed into a platform of opposition discontent.

EL GANADOR ■ El Fisgón



Ganador

Por Naranjo



As the calls of fraud grew louder, Paz was less conciliatory. At the end of July he warned, "a raíz del crecimiento de la oposición y también las denuncias del fraude, el nuevo presidente, Carlos Salinas de Gortari, asumirá el poder con menos autoridad, lo cual no conviene al país". Rather than examine the basis of the charges, Paz accused those opposed to the official result of weakening the country. He was nonetheless optimistic: "Estamos entrando en una nueva etapa política."⁵⁸ Such comments were the source of much rancour for the many who believed that Mexicans had voted to end the one-party system, only to be denied by fraud.⁵⁹

If Paz believed he had made his final comments on this issue, he was mistaken. On 10 August he explained, "me había prometido no volver a escribir sobre la actualidad política. La situación que vivimos después de las elecciones [...] me obliga a **romper mi voto**".⁶⁰ It was an unfortunate phrase given the present atmosphere. Clearly alarmed by the political climate, Paz repeated that Mexico's current democratic transition had been engendered by the Student Movement: "El movimiento terminó en un charco de sangre. [...] Ahora ha renacido." He explained that in 1968 Mexico had faced a dilemma:

Los jóvenes de entonces, así como muchos ideólogos de izquierda, sostenían que la única salida del atolladero histórico era un cambio revolucionario violento. No eran democráticos ni creían en las que llamaban, desdeñosamente, "las libertades formales" de la burguesía. En [*Posdata...*] sostuve precisamente lo contrario: la crisis de México era una crisis de crecimiento y la salida hacia formas más plurales y democráticas de convivencia debería ser pacífica y gradual.⁶¹

Paz did call for democracy in *Posdata*, but not that it should be achieved gradually. He also seemed to have forgotten that far from violent revolutionaries, he described members of the Student Movement as "reformista y democrático, a pesar de que algunos

de sus dirigentes pertenecen a la extrema izquierda".⁶² Indeed, Paz's interpretations of the Student Movement and the PRI had undergone several modifications. In 1970 Paz emphatically stated that the students sought democracy;⁶³ three years later he blamed the violence of 1968 on the government's inability to accept any form of criticism. He regretted the lack of a credible opposition force, and suggested that the Left should undergo a process of regeneration and listen to the views of the Mexican people.⁶⁴ Disregarding his comment in 1968 that it would be absurd to consider the renovation of the PRI after the events of 2 October,⁶⁵ in 1981, Paz highlighted the contradiction between the revolution the Student Movement hoped to achieve and the move towards political reform, democracy and pluralism it had accomplished. This, Paz claimed, was an important first step, adding, "el próximo paso debe ser, quizá, la reforma democrática dentro del mismo PRI".⁶⁶ In 1983 Paz stated, "the central and most urgent question in Mexico is to achieve a political reform that assures, once and for all, the rotation in power of the different parties through free elections".⁶⁷ In 1991 Paz would describe the student leaders as "partidarios de una revolución social violenta y estaban influidos por la Revolución cubana".⁶⁸ What was it that Paz saw in Salinas that blinded him to his own former views and, arguably, to overlook the will of the Mexican electorate? Did Paz believe that the only means to achieve gradual "democracy" was from within the system and that if he supported Salinas from the outset he could expect to influence government policy? Was Paz swayed by a personal ambition to work alongside Salinas and ignored the other alternatives?

Paz explained that Mexico's all-powerful bureaucratic machine had been an obstacle to political, economic and cultural modernisation. He also claimed the opposition parties' weakness impeded development: "Ninguno de ellos representaba, en

el sentido mejor del palabra, la realidad de México". Paz was keen to reiterate his thesis of Mexican society expressed in *Posdata* and, whether or not his analysis was correct, he dismissed the possibility that many might disagree with him. There was a role for Paz in the transformation process: "Los intelectuales han sido y son gran fermento político y moral de la Edad Moderna [...]. Sin ellos se puede ganar votos, pero no cambiar una nación."⁶⁹ For Paz it was intellectuals and not politicians who modified society. Like Fuentes with Echeverría, Paz perhaps felt that his ideas would be put into practice if he supported Salinas. In an intriguing editorial decision, at the bottom of Paz's article a meeting led by Cárdenas and Rosario Ibarra de Piedra entitled "¡¡¡En defensa de la voluntad popular!!!" was advertised. It stated, "¡Cárdenas ganó, el pueblo lo eligió!".⁷⁰ It served as a stark reminder that others believed the election result to be fraudulent and were trying to do something to rectify it.

Continuing his argument, Paz proposed political and social reforms including the democratisation of the unions.⁷¹ As if anticipating the Chiapas rebellion, Paz emphasised the unequal position of campesinos, converted into "perpetuos menores de edad" by State protection. Eager to show that he was in tune with Mexican reality, Paz added, "durante los últimos treinta años la sociedad civil ha crecido, según lo muestran las últimas elecciones". Paz admitted that the PRI had erred in not allowing Cárdenas and Muñoz Ledo more participation and acknowledged their "inteligencia y energía" that caused the cohesion of many parties of the Left. Paz nonetheless claimed that neocardenismo "carece de programa". Following the current trend of tainting Cárdenas, and perhaps forgetting that he had described his father's presidency as "excelente y generoso",⁷² Paz affirmed: "el PRI está compuesto no por individuos sino por

corporaciones (herencia de Cárdenas)". Accepting that Salinas's victory was disputed, Paz then adopted a conciliatory, albeit patronising tone:

Es indudable que el neocardenismo recoge una tradición revolucionaria mexicana. Por eso, a diferencia de otros grupos de izquierda, ha podido atraer al verdadero pueblo. Su mexicanismo no está en duda; lo están la novedad, la originalidad y la coherencia de sus ideas. Las vagas declaraciones de sus dirigentes no substituyen a un auténtico programa.⁷³

In recognising the popularity of neocardenismo, Paz revealed his concerns that a political party without a cohesive programme would gain power. Given that Cárdenas had recently emerged as an independent candidate and that Castillo had joined him at the eleventh hour, Paz's unease may have been justified; but was this sufficient cause to reject the desires of the electorate? Paz explained that neocardenismo encompassed many different groups with contradictory programmes, united only in their opposition to the PRI. He believed that such a coalition could not effectively govern the country. In the interests of what was in his opinion the greater long-term good, and ironically in the name of democratic change, Paz was apparently prepared to ignore the wishes of the Mexican people.

Turning to the election itself, Paz stated that the unprecedented high turnout proved that democracy was possible: "El voto secreto y libre de los mexicanos acabó, en un día, con el sistema de partido único." Paz chose not to mention that many sustained their votes had been lost overnight by the ruling party. Far from this, Paz perceived a new beginning: "Comenzamos ahora a dar los primeros pasos en un territorio desconocido: el régimen pluralista de partidos." Unlike Monsiváis and Poniatowska who had celebrated the rise of civil society three years earlier, Paz seemed to have little confidence in Mexicans' ability to take these steps: "¿Serémos capaces de

convirtir en una democracia abierta, con todos sus riesgos y limitaciones?" Secure in the strength of his own convictions, Paz dismissed those who denounced the election result: "He leído con atención sus argumentos y confieso que no me han convencido. [...] Creo que todo aquel que examine con imparcialidad y sin pasión este asunto llegará a conclusiones parecidos a las mías." Paz could not conceive that anyone would disagree with him; yet even he dared not deny that infringements had occurred: "Sin duda hubo irregularidades; además, torpezas y errores. Es natural."⁷⁴ It is extraordinary that Paz, who had for so long postulated democratic change, could dismiss electoral manipulation as "natural".

Paz rejected any proposals to rectify the "irregularities". He dismissed Cárdenas's claim of victory as foolish and Manuel Clouthier's demand for the election to be re-staged as unfeasible. Such attitudes, Paz added, indicated their determination to force Salinas's "rendición incondicional", proving that "no son partidarios de una transición - o sea: una evolución gradual y pacífica, como pedimos algunos desde 1969 - sino un cambio brusco, instantáneo".⁷⁵ Paz revealed that since 1969 he and others had been working to achieve political change. Yet is a pacific evolution achieved by those who deny free elections, or those who demand them? Paz appeared to pay lip service to democracy while silencing the public voice. Civil society had come of age and, like the campesinos, no longer wanted to be treated like a child for its own protection; yet Paz could not cast off the paternal mask.

Paz called upon the government and opposition parties to renounce violence: he recommended that the PRI accept the increased opposition presence in the political chambers, and suggested that neocardenismo be converted into a political party with an

authentic programme. He added one condition, "deberían repudiar al socialismo totalitario, si es que quieren que tomemos en serio sus invocaciones a la democracia".⁷⁶ Paz's perception of a democratic party was evidently one that rejected extreme viewpoints, rather than reflecting diverse opinions and reaching compromises.

As one accustomed to swimming against the tide, Paz could not have been surprised by the heated response to his articles. Ugo Pipitone was an uncomfortable opponent: "No estoy de acuerdo con Octavio Paz. Lo digo con timidez temiendo que un rayo flamígero me pueda incinerar por tanta osadía."⁷⁷ José Cueli reminded Paz that 25 per cent of the population was forced to live in poverty, a circumstance that should be corrected before one could talk of democracy or modernisation.⁷⁸ Luis Javier Garrido directly accused Paz of repeating, albeit eloquently, the official version of the election: without proof of fraud, the opposition must admit defeat. Garrido added that Paz's own political bias coloured his vision of events: "El problema del verano de 1988 no es desde luego quién era el mejor candidato en junio, sino a quién eligió el pueblo de México para gobernar en diciembre." Paz's argument, he continued, was based upon the fact that Salinas "won" because the opposition had no specific political policy. Garrido stressed the imperative to defend the vote, "que es la única vía posible para una verdadera modernización", and denounced Paz's support of the government as an "acto político".⁷⁹ He affirmed that although democracy had been frustrated, it would eventually prevail, "a pesar de muchos intelectuales". Another opponent, Eduardo Huchim acknowledged the weight of Paz's words: "En el altar mayor de la intelectualidad mexicana, Octavio Paz es dios. Por eso sus opiniones [...] poseen un enorme peso y una impactante influencia en una amplia franja de la sociedad nacional."⁸⁰ Both Garrido and Huchim emphasised Paz's power as an intellectual and

argued that personal political affiliations should not cloud his judgement. Intellectuals' views were vital components of public opinion; Paz should act responsibly. As Fuentes had stated in 1969, "debemos preguntarnos cuál será el destino de las palabras en una sociedad como la nuestra".⁸¹

Paz's attempts to link the Student Movement to the official result of the 1988 election were equally contested. In agreement with Monsiváis, former student leader Adolfo Gilly stated that rather than revolutionising Mexican society overnight, votes for Cárdenas were the culmination of a long political struggle: "Defendemos en cada voto, a favor de quien sea, la encarnación más elemental de nuestra condición ciudadana pisoteada y atropellada desde siempre por el poder y su partido, el PRI. ¿Por qué usted, Octavio, no nos acompaña sin reservas en algo tan sencillo, legal y transparente?"⁸² In an emotional appeal Gilly expressed disappointment of Paz's apparent transformation, but proposed that they resolve their differences rationally in a public debate: Paz, Krauze, and Héctor Aguilar Camín, against Monsiváis and himself.

Joining the discussion, Superbarrio emphasised that Paz was ignoring the experience of the 1985 earthquakes:

Desde entonces tomamos la iniciativa. Ahí empezó otra ciudad, otro país. La ciudad abjuró de sí misma para renacer. Los del pueblo aprendimos a identificar a los nuestros y a votar por ellos. Aprendimos a sobrevivir sin el PRI y los poderosos, aprendimos a hacer política sin ellos y contra ellos.⁸³

Superbarrio sustained that Mexicans had voted to end the one-party monopoly of power, but their choice was violated. Paz asked for proof of fraud, he continued, but failed to mention that the counting process was overseen by the PRI - hardly a disinterested party. Superbarrio urged Paz to respect the will of the people; he humorously added that

by writing to contest Paz's views, he had entered the intellectual arena. In the interests of equity, therefore, he challenged Paz to a wrestling match. Rules would be based upon the justice that had been denied in the ballot: "Comprometiéndonos a que aún siendo tú fuerte, si perdieras, tendrías que reconocerlo. Me comprometo a hacer lo propio."⁸⁴ Like Garrido, Superbarrio stressed that what mattered was who won the contest rather than who the best candidate might be.

Daniel Cazés recalled that Paz's support of the students in 1968 demonstrated his knowledge of Mexican issues; twenty years later his disregard for the electoral fraud showed Paz had lost this close understanding. Cazés believed Mexican society had changed more substantially and had taken a different direction from that which Paz had anticipated. He added that Paz failed to perceive the widespread anger after the earthquakes. This wrath had been converted into the democratic impulse that led Mexicans to vote to end the current regime. Cazés placed Paz at the head of a group of intellectuals, "que, sin ser miembros del PRI, formulan hoy el discurso neopriísta: se consideran a sí mismos como los más lúcidos, imparciales y salomónicos".⁸⁵ Although Cazés mentioned no names, he was referring to Krauze and the *Vuelta* group, and to Aguilar Camín at *Nexos*. Salinas's attempts to court intellectuals were already being observed.

Paz could hardly be expected to accept such criticism without further comment. He dismissed Garrido's arguments: "no examina mis puntos de vista sino que ve en ellos únicamente un reflejo de mi mal humor ante los triunfos de los neocardenistas". In the same spirit, Cazés's views were also rejected: Paz described him as "más que un agitador es un agitado, un convulsionario. [...] Lo dejo peleando con sus obsesiones."⁸⁶

Paz denied a fundamental difference of opinion with Gilly, stating that if their ideas were compared many similarities would be found. For Paz, the disparity lay in their visions of the PRI as a social and historical phenomenon, and in their interpretations of a pacific transition towards democratic pluralism. Paz reiterated that annulling the official election result could herald a return to authoritarian rule; tampering with ballot boxes was apparently not deemed to be the action of a despotic regime. He nonetheless declined Gilly's invitation to debate because an impartial moderator would be difficult to find; further deliberation would only fuel the present tension. Besides, he added, "¿no está demasiado tarde? Dentro de unos cuantos días sabremos a qué atenernos: o se habrá integrado el Congreso o habrá estallado una crisis constitucional." Here Paz, the champion of political polemics advocated that a plural political discussion was inappropriate. Did he fear defeat? Paz likewise refused Superbarrio's challenge to the ring, claiming that a "super-ring" would be necessary to house all his critics. He recommended instead that Superbarrio study his work. Paz claimed, "Superbarrio puede encontrar en mis artículos respuestas a sus rechazos, cortos, rodillazos, ganchos, uppercuts y torceduras de mano".⁸⁷

From the tone of Paz's reply, it is easy to understand Pipitone's reservations about contradicting him. Pipitone escaped lightly: like Superbarrio, Paz merely referred him to the essays he had written since 1965 discussing modernity. Had Pipitone read them, Paz added, "no me atribuiría las simplezas que me endosa".⁸⁸ His inconsistencies aside, Paz was surely a little naive. As stated in chapter one, in 1950 Paz admitted that his analysis of Mexican society did not include all its citizens.⁸⁹ Had Paz continued to focus upon like-minded people when postulating solutions to the nation's problems? It seems unlikely; *The Labyrinth of Solitude* had a far more limited circulation than *La*

Jornada both in numbers and class. Did Paz really expect *La Jornada* readers to be familiar with all his numerous essays, articles, and books and to take them into consideration when interpreting his work? As Garrido and Eduardo Huchim stated, as an intellectual and leading public figure Paz had responsibilities: liabilities that included clarity of meaning when addressing matters of national importance. Moreover his proclamations and analyses should be properly researched. As Superbarrio stressed, this was Paz's professional arena; he should consider the impact of his words on others when stating his case.

Cazés's accusation that Paz led a group of intellectuals who were attached to the PRI was substantiated by Aguilar Camín's and Fernando Benítez's support for Paz. Aguilar Camín praised Paz's contribution of balance and clarity to the controversy of the ballot.⁹⁰ Benítez shared Paz's fear of violence: "Si se dispara el primer tiro la catástrofe será irreversible." Benítez, too, overlooked the fact that electoral fraud could be seen as a first aggressive strike. Following Paz's lead, he focused upon the democratic gains of the presidential election. His vision was of a glorious future: "El término del patriotismo, el término del absolutismo presidencial, el término del partido único, el término de la hueca retórica de la promesa nunca cumplida."⁹¹ The presidency of Salinas would put such views to the test.

Reeling from Krauze's attack, perhaps, Fuentes made little contribution to the debates. Nonetheless, it is unlikely that the enigmatic, diplomatic writer would have adhered to one candidate or another before the outcome was certain. In the weeks preceding the ballot, Fuentes described himself as of the centre-left. He explained that if he were Spanish or British he would support the labour parties, but as a Mexican he

had no political affiliation.⁹² Days after the result was announced, Fuentes spoke out against the excessive strength of the State and stressed the need to cede power to civil society. He expressed his belief that Mexico would become a plural society, but neither specified how this could be achieved nor mentioned the fraud.⁹³ In September 1989 Fuentes voiced disappointment that modernisation had been achieved without social justice or political democracy.⁹⁴ The following year, referring to Mario Vargas Llosa's "perfect dictatorship", Fuentes described the Mexican State as an imperfect democracy, and spoke of electoral fraud in vague terms.⁹⁵ Even with the hindsight of Salinas's term of office, Fuentes would not commit himself. In mid-1994, he referred to the 1988 elections as a watershed that, "reveló la existencia de un país inédito, para el cual las fórmulas consagradas por la PRI, ya no surtían efecto". The closest Fuentes came to a condemnation was to insist on the credibility of the forthcoming presidential elections.⁹⁶ As in his relationship with Echeverría, it appeared that Fuentes would not risk alienation from Salinas.

Although Poniatowska voted for Cárdenas she, too, failed to participate greatly in the controversy surrounding the result.⁹⁷ At the time she was occupied with the publication of *Nada nadie*. From her few comments, however, it can be seen that she believed there to have been widespread fraud. Interviewed on the twentieth anniversary of the publication of *La noche de Tlatelolco*, Poniatowska spoke of the fraudulent election that had kept the PRI in power, asking if the 1.5 million Mexicans who died in the Revolution for "sufragio efectivo, no reelección" had perished in vain.⁹⁸ It is significant that when stating her case Poniatowska referred to the revolutionary struggle (that no Mexican would dare to oppose) rather than the Student Movement (that had been used as justification by those who supported Salinas and followers of Cárdenas

alike). She drew upon Mexican values to ensure public support for her point of view. In September 1988, at the launch of *Nada, nadie*, Poniatowska, like Monsiváis, Superbarrio and Daniel Cazés, drew parallels between the aftermath of the earthquakes and the current political situation: "Desde un punto de vista político los efectos del terremoto tienen mucho que ver con lo que actualmente sucede con Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas, con la efervescencia política, la gente ya no es tan apática para manifestar y exigir lo que quiere, es más abierto el rechazo al gobierno."⁹⁹ Poniatowska's words had more power given their context: she endorsed the demonstrations against Salinas as a continuation of the civic spirit that had emerged after the earthquakes. In the aftermath of the earthquakes, Poniatowska had singled out Cárdenas for praise. Describing a meeting of the National Reconstruction Committee, she noted that, "su parquedad contrasta con los demás; ni autoelogio, ni autocomplacencia, ni loas al presidente."¹⁰⁰ In 1988, she reiterated this admiration: "Me gustaba desde antes por su sobriedad y austeridad. [...] Es una persona alejada de la egolatría y del narcisismo, te da la sensación de que va más allá de su propia persona."¹⁰¹ Seven years later, after Salinas's fall from grace, Poniatowska was more emphatic, asserting that the earthquakes had made Mexicans aware of their capabilities. The result could be seen in the 1988 election that she claimed Cárdenas won.¹⁰²

Although completely opposed to Paz after the election, Monsiváis was not among those who directly confronted his views, preferring to concentrate upon political matters.¹⁰³ Indeed, there was some common ground: both were opposed to change by violent means; both traced the democratic current to the Student Movement. Chronicling the twentieth anniversary commemorations, Monsiváis recalled how the protests had been interpreted as a conspiracy against the government. He commented,

“en México sólo existe la política oficial que lo condujo a la Presidencia, lo demás es la Conjura, las fuerzas que se agitan en la obscuridad”.¹⁰⁴ Monsiváis used the present tense for his remarks; was he implying that this situation remained? Only nine days earlier, he had reported that vast crowds had taken to the streets to contend the official election result.¹⁰⁵ In 1968 there had been a need for subtlety and innuendo: in 1988 Monsiváis emphatically stated his case:

A quienes desean enterarse de la continuidad de la lógica diazordacista, les recomiendo la lectura de la “Declaración del Comité Ejecutivo Nacional de la Confederación Nacional de Organizaciones Populares”. [...] Allí la CNOP es pródiga en las tácticas (sic) tan afamadas en 68. [...] Para la CNOP, Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas recurre a las acusaciones falsas, a la mentira y a la provocación cotidiana, es autoritario [...]. Y ésto es verdad porque lo dice la CNOP, templo de la autoridad moral. Diazordacismo puro.¹⁰⁶

Monsiváis decried the smear campaign and charges of perjury against Cárdenas,¹⁰⁷ reminding his readers that Díaz Ordaz’s legacy was apparent in the CNOP. He stressed that the need to take to the streets was as paramount in 1988 as it had been in 1968; lies, slander and corruption remained at the centre of Mexican political life. Like Poniatowska, Monsiváis used a topical, historical issue to sanction the present marches. In the same way that Poniatowska recalled the Revolution, which was beyond criticism, Monsiváis used Díaz Ordaz, who had no supporters, as a rallying force for the present protests.

Monsiváis’s response to the electoral process can be traced through his many articles immediately following the computer “breakdown”. He underlined his motives for writing: “En esperanza que los organismos de oposición documenten de la manera más exhaustiva posible lo que se consideran el fraude o, si se prefiere, ‘la corrección desde arriba de las decisiones absurdas de la mayoría’ (o ‘el perfeccionamiento de la

voluntad popular’).” Monsiváis made no secret of the fact that he was working as the organic intellectual of the opposition. Without directly stating it, Monsiváis confirmed that the governing party would do its utmost to avoid defeat by manipulating the vote; indeed, he had repeatedly warned of this beforehand. Monsiváis pointed to the practice of treating Mexicans as minors, and satirised the PRI’s attitude: “Es maravilloso que crean en la democracia, y es una lástima que no podamos hacerles caso en esta ocasión.” Monsiváis stressed he was not duped by Salinas’s pronouncements of political pluralism, and questioned Manuel Camacho’s declaration that 1988 produced, “las elecciones más limpias”. He asked, ¿y qué fueron las anteriores: menos limpias o más sucias?”¹⁰⁸ For Monsiváis, the large turnout proved that the electorate rejected violence as a form of opposition, and had voted for political reform. Such collective action had been ignored in recent history: “Como en 1968, como en las advertencias regañadoras del 19 y 20 de septiembre de 1985, la estrategia de disipar la realidad por el simple método de no admitirla en la televisión, ha proseguido [...] al día de hoy.”¹⁰⁹ Monsiváis charted the growth of civil society through these key moments, emphasising that although Mexicans had changed, the political system remained static.

He then concentrated upon the vote itself, stressing that the mere suspicion of a PRI defeat had given hope to all those excluded from political participation: “Mi voto es una mínima y máxima rebeldía contra la impunidad legalizada.” Mexicans could use the ballot to achieve a change of power, and thus obtain their full constitutional rights and freedom from decades of constraint. Monsiváis examined the antecedents of such a transformation, among them the expansion in higher education of the 1970s, more tolerance within the political parties of the Left; the experience gained from independent action following the earthquakes; and the rise of a new generation that had grown up

under the shadow of the Tlatelolco massacre.¹¹⁰ Mexican society had undergone a gradual process of change that had begun in 1968; for Monsiváis, the 1988 elections marked a psychological and physical coming of age of the Student Movement: many Mexicans from a variety of social positions voted to end the single party system.

From July to December 1988, Monsiváis worked intensely to keep Cárdenas in the public arena. He explained that the prevailing government attitude, “no cederemos el poder” was tantamount to a dictatorship: “Decir ‘no concederemos el poder’ es descalificar de antemano los resultados de cualquier proceso electoral, y hacer del mando la propiedad intransferible.” Monsiváis was clearly incensed by the government’s flagrant disregard for the popular will and its determination to retain control. Stepping into the narrative Monsiváis affirmed, “sé que a la gran mayoría priísta le resulta impensable la igualdad jurídica [...] y simplemente no conciben la igualdad política”. Far from merely reporting, Monsiváis was trying to incite public outrage. He quoted the CTM leader, veteran Fidel Velázquez, who had led the unions since the Revolution: “Llegamos con balas, y sólo nos sacarán con balas.” In such a climate, the peaceful transfer of power for which Mexicans had voted was impossible. Monsiváis emphasised that the government’s strong paternal nature sought “alejar de manos siempre inexpertas la tentación del poder”.¹¹¹

Monsiváis nonetheless confirmed that the PRI had lost all credibility despite its power and affirmations to the contrary. He maintained, “el duelo en torno a la votación del 6 de julio, y un forcejeo publicitario desea amendar el voto por Cárdenas y por el PAN”. Monsiváis advised the public not to be persuaded by official proclamations of a Salinas victory. The struggle was not lost; public opinion was strongly against the PRI:

“En septiembre de 1988 la batalla evidente se da por una causa democrática, indispensable en el camino a la justicia social: la eliminación del fraude electoral, es decir, el respecto a la voluntad ciudadana”.¹¹² Monsiváis endorsed the protesters’ legitimacy by underlining their democratic aims and respect of the public will. He was also, perhaps, attempting to convert those who regarded any opposition to government as militant action. Again, Monsiváis was trying to direct public opinion, using his position as a political journalist to urge the public to ignore the government pronouncements. Monsiváis was not blind to the faults of neocardenismo; indeed, he listed them, and agreed with Paz that it encompassed a wide range of ideologies and lacked an understanding of reality. Yet Monsiváis emphasised that such failings should not condemn the movement. Although he did not mention him, Monsiváis surely included Paz as he stressed, “en su frenesí, los anticardenistas se olvidan que a estos seres ‘detestables’ los acompañaron millones de votos, reconocidos y por reconocer algún día, que corresponden a millones de personas que, de un modo u otro, razonaron y siguen razonando su decisión”.¹¹³ Acknowledging the shortcomings of neocardenismo at such a crucial time suggests that Monsiváis would not have been an unconditional supporter had Cárdenas become president. Perhaps for Monsiváis the imperative was a change of power.¹¹⁴ Although his support for Cárdenas in 1988 was genuine, criticism would have continued; one can only speculate how Cárdenas would have reacted to such censure.

Monsiváis then examined the appeal of neocardenismo underlining how people had quickly become attached to the cause:

En cuatro o cinco meses, se trasladan a la superficie más visible procesos (acciones, movilizaciones, rechazos ideológicos, certidumbres vitales), que llevaban décadas de germinación subterránea. Mucha de la madurez de las

distintas sociedades de México, que identifico no sólo pero centralmente con la modernización de las mentalidades, se expresa a través del entusiasmo ante la alternativa cardenista [...] de centro-izquierda.¹¹⁵

The movement might have a new name, but it encompassed sentiments of deep-rooted, just causes; Monsiváis was among the many who pledged support for Cárdenas in the hope of achieving long-held dreams of change. He added, "considero al movimiento [...] el más importante surgido en México en los últimos cincuenta años". Monsiváis interpreted neocardenismo to be working to achieve the unfulfilled revolutionary goals. He claimed the country would be revitalised by the democratic, non-violent stance that represented the wishes of millions of Mexicans. Monsiváis was evidently trying to increase support for the cause. Yet he urged those who had been cheated of their rights to exercise self-restraint: "Defender la esperanza democrática es, hoy, contener las promesas de violencia y las provocaciones, y promover al máximo el ejercicio de la racionalidad."¹¹⁶ Like Paz, Krauze and Benítez, Monsiváis feared the outbreak of violence and stressed the need for calm; the difference was that Monsiváis viewed neocardenismo as a feasible solution to Mexico's political problems. Monsiváis implied that those who impeded its progress would provoke a resort to arms. The accuracy of his prediction would be seen in Chiapas on 1 January 1994.

His efforts to uphold the will of the electorate were not restricted to the press. On 11 September, Monsiváis led a panel to promote Carlos Mendoza's film, "Crónica de un fraude", introducing it as a "trabajo excelente".¹¹⁷ More than an account of the fraud, Monsiváis stated, the documentary measured, "el surgimiento del nuevo espíritu popular, del arduo entendimiento de las dificultades para forjar en la legalidad la sociedad más justa".¹¹⁸ As in 1968 when he hosted radio programmes in support of the students, Monsiváis worked in more than one media. Yet Monsiváis was swimming

against the tide. Although Cárdenas supporters maintained their candidate had won, lack of proof prevented a change of government. On 1 December 1988, Salinas was inaugurated; Monsiváis designated the spectacle, "el Día Nacional de la Legitimidad Priísta", and depicted Salinas's address as "su cadena de ofrecimientos y promesas". In the course of the speech, Monsiváis added, these pledges "cunden al grado de masificar la utopía". Emphasising his belief that nothing had changed, Monsiváis described the new cabinet replacing the old, "como por espejo". Monsiváis focused on Salinas's acknowledgement that social justice, the main promise of the Revolution, had not been realised. He demanded, "¿por qué no se dijo todo esto antes?". He explained that Salinas would like Mexicans to believe that until 1 December 1988, the State was dogmatic and outmoded and had restricted political plurality. If this were the case, Monsiváis asked, quoting directly from Salinas's speech, how was it possible that De la Madrid, "nos dejó un Estado más eficaz, una economía más sana, libertades intactas y una vigorosa vida política"? From the outset Monsiváis denounced Salinas; he was not beguiled by his fine words. For Monsiváis, the incumbent president's position, although now constitutionally secure, remained tenuous; significant sectors of the population believed him to be a usurper. More crucial for Monsiváis was the improbability of Salinas's pledges becoming reality. He asked how could justice and relative prosperity develop "en el seno del atraso".¹¹⁹

To distance himself from any blame, perhaps, in his inaugural address Salinas raised the matter of the controversy surrounding the elections. He claimed that the ensuing chaos was a result of, "tácticas preelectorales de algunos opositores y deficiencias en el mecanismo oficial de información". Monsiváis was unconvinced: "Mi impresión, y la de millones de personas es que lo sucedido fue algo más complejo y

vasto, y que el fraude benefició de manera espectacular a un solo partido y muchísimos de sus candidatos. El mismo Salinas reconoce [...] que la votación mayoritaria le fue adversa al gobierno."¹²⁰ Significantly, Monsiváis did not state that Cárdenas should have become president, making the less contentious observation that more people had voted against Salinas than for him. The efforts to prevent Salinas's inauguration had been in vain; only a violent upheaval would remove him from office. Monsiváis was against such action, and changed his tone in the interests of peace. Rather than incite the millions of opposition supporters to take action, Monsiváis accepted that the PRI would be in power for six more years. Yet far from passively admitting defeat, Monsiváis put his skills to immediate use, being a constant thorn in the presidential side. He noted how Salinas paid lip-service to the demands of the people and warned that gestures alone were inadequate. Monsiváis asked:

¿Cómo creer que el Sistema que tanto ha destruido al país construirá la nueva sociedad, y que los expertos en las viejas prácticas, dirigirán las nuevas? [...] El gobierno está dividido en dos líneas de conducta posible, con pocas cosas en común: el discurso de toma de posesión y el Gabinete Presidencial.¹²¹

Monsiváis was at his most critical: he doubted Salinas's promises and, from the outset, qualified his mistrust. Moreover, Monsiváis stressed that he was not alone; a substantial section of the population agreed with him. Throughout the article Monsiváis referred to Salinas as "licenciado" and not "presidente": indeed an insult as Salinas was granted two MAs and a PhD at Harvard.

Some conclusions

Their extensive and spirited comments reveal that both Paz and Monsiváis viewed the 1988 election as a crucial episode in Mexican history; through their writing, each hoped to achieve different ends. Before the election, Monsiváis worked to assist Cárdenas, and afterwards protested strongly against what he believed to have been a denial of the popular choice. He enjoyed no immediate success. Overlooking the controversy of the election result, Paz supported democratic change from within the system. He might argue that his was an effective method: electoral reform laws in 1993 promised independent overseeing of the voting and counting processes; in 1996 identification cards were issued and stronger measures were taken to prevent tampering with the ballot boxes. The Instituto Federal Electoral (IFE) became more independent.¹²²

Both Paz and Monsiváis supported their different perspectives by drawing links with the Student Movement. Monsiváis stated that in 1968 Mexico had suffered a repressive government that impeded the legitimate wishes of its people; in 1988 the same autocratic party was determined to prevent democratic change. For Monsiváis, the desires of 1968 were the same as those of 1988; aspirations that could be best fulfilled with Cárdenas as president. During the last twenty years, and in particular since the earthquakes of 1985, Monsiváis had monitored the evolution of Mexican society. He stressed that Mexicans were ready to participate in their own affairs, but Monsiváis wanted a peaceful transition: one that could easily and indisputably be achieved through the ballot. After Salinas's inauguration Monsiváis softened his tone, but kept a sharp, censorious eye on the President. Paz claimed that 1988 marked the culmination of a twenty-year struggle for democratic change. The repressive machinery of 1968 had been modified beyond recognition; President Salinas would bring modernity and

prosperity to Mexico. Like Monsiváis, Paz was opposed to violence, but sustained that only with the PRI in power would it diminish.

Paz's apparent disdain for the wishes of the Mexican public led to accusations that he had changed his political affiliation and betrayed the ideals he had expressed in 1968. Was this a fair charge? Paz's attitude in 1968 had been misinterpreted: "La renuncia de Octavio Paz [...] despertaron expectativas *políticas* que no figuraban en su proyecto y que, al cumplirse de manera distinta a la que esperaban sus lectores."¹²³ Rather than expressing radical or left-wing sentiments, in October 1968 Paz resigned in protest against the use of force against Mexico's youth. Paz's opposition to violence was consistent: in 1988 he clearly wanted to avert conflict. Yet back in 1968 Paz also sought to transform Mexico's authoritarian system. In 1989 he commented, "en mi regreso de los setenta lo fundamental era reflexionar sobre México para cambiarlo. Y eso es lo que estamos viviendo todavía."¹²⁴ In 1971 Paz had returned to the country in the hope of achieving political change; evidently at the beginning of Salinas's presidency, Paz believed that this was being accomplished. In 1991, Roger Bartra explained that Paz likened Salinas's modernisation programme to Gorbachov's reforms, whereas Paz continued to see the Left as handicapped by dogmatic attitudes.¹²⁵ Hence Paz believed that Salinas best served Mexican interests. However, Paz's post-electoral stance marred his reputation within Mexico. Jorge Castañeda claimed, "[Paz's] democratic credentials were far from impeccable, given his silence regarding recurrent electoral fraud".¹²⁶ PRD *diputado*, Jesús Ortega, stated that Paz's political assertions were invalid as he never referred to the manipulation of the vote.¹²⁷ Former researcher at the Bellas Artes Institute, José Luquin, asserted that in political matters, "[Paz] es un perfecto bisoño".¹²⁸ Enrique González Rojo explained: "su actitud en los últimos años

frente a acontecimientos básicos como lo fue el fraude de 1988 deja muchísima que desear. Se ha puesto del lado de los hampones electorales y de los enemigos del pueblo mexicana."¹²⁹ Writing in *Vuelta*, Christopher Domínguez Michael voiced regret that Paz was not among those who called for the election to be annulled.¹³⁰ In 1983 Paz had stated that Mexicans wanted "a free and democratic public life"; he warned, "public opinion is coming more and more to reject the patrimonialism and paternalism of the regime, and aspires to a free and democratic public life. It would be very dangerous if our leaders were to disregard this insistent, general outcry."¹³¹ Yet only five years later was he not advocating that very thing? Paz may have sustained that the official result of the 1988 election was beneficial to the Mexican democratic process; he may appear to have been vindicated by the short-term successes of Salinas's presidency, but a high personal cost was paid in Paz's relationships with his peers. The price would rise sharply at the end of Salinas's presidency.

Notes to chapter five

- ¹ Paz, "Contrarronda", p.17.
- ² Roger Bartra, Luis Javier Garrido, Adolfo Gilly, Rubén Jiménez Ricárdez, Carlos Pereyra, "México: la democracia y la izquierda", *Cuadernos Políticos*, No.40-50, Jan.-June 1987, p.24.
- ³ *Ibid.*, p.26.
- ⁴ Castañeda, *Utopia Unarmed*, p.225.
- ⁵ Handelman, *Mexican Politics*, p.80.
- ⁶ Sonia Morales, "Elogios a Guillermo Tovar e impugnaciones al cargo de cronista de la ciudad de México", *Proceso*, No.498, 19 May 1986, pp.44-45.
- ⁷ [N.A.], "Ningún juez se atreve a otorgar amparos contra Laguna Verde", *Proceso*, No.582, 28 Dec. 1987, p.29. Although Monsiváis was referring to the government's refusal to listen to popular protests against the installation of a nuclear power station at Laguna Verde, Veracruz, his use of "en México" indicated he was widening the issue to political matters in general.
- ⁸ Federico Campbell, "Garrido: Con su presencia, los intelectuales legitiman al PRI", *Proceso*, No.588, 8 Feb. 1988, p.48.
- ⁹ Carlos Salinas, "Tríptico de la dependencia: frustración y limitación en la visión", *Plural*, No.38, Nov. 1974, pp.26-30.
- ¹⁰ Sonia Morales, "Otro candidato, misma propuesta: Crear el Fondo para las artes", *Proceso*, No.589, 15 Feb. 1988, pp.44-47. In response, López Portillo constructed the unsuccessful Fondo Nacional para las Actividades Sociales (FONAPAS) that resulted in "un conflicto de ambigüedad" with the Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes (INBA). In November 1981, a symposium was held to discuss views on the importance of cultural and political change. Salinas was among the participants. The twenty-six people who signed Paz's original proposal in 1975 included Fernando Benítez, Monsiváis, José Emilio Pacheco and Poniatowska.
- ¹¹ Armando Ponce, "Rechaza Paz la Secretaria de Cultura, expresión del Estado para controlar el arte", *Proceso*, No.590, 22 Feb. 1988, p.46.
- ¹² Federico Campbell, "Entre Nexos y Vuelta, Salinas de Gortari", *Proceso*, No.588, 8 Feb. 1988, pp.46-49. Campbell apparently overlooked Fuentes's ties with President Echeverría.
- ¹³ Among those who objected to the plant were Monsiváis, Poniatowska, and *Vuelta* contributors, Guillermo Sheridan and Fabienne Bradu. Many statements were issued from 1987 onwards. See for example, "No a Laguna Verde Nuclear", *Proceso*, No.561, 3 Aug. 1987, pp.62-63. Included in the hundreds of signatories were Vicente Leñero, Carmen Boulosa, Juan Bañuelos, academics and politicians from the opposition parties. Only one member of the PRI endorsed the document: Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas.
- ¹⁴ Carlos Monsiváis, "La disobediencia civil, un ilegal acto legítimo", *Proceso*, No.587, 1 Feb. 1988, p.18.
- ¹⁵ Carlos Monsiváis, "En la Laguna, Cuauhtémoc cosecha el fruto de la ignorancia del PRI sobre Lázaro Cárdenas", *Proceso*, No.589, 15 Feb. 1988, pp.8-9.
- ¹⁶ Carlos Monsiváis, "De la alegría popular con Heberto al entusiasmo por Cuauhtémoc, pasando por la languidez del Zócalo oficial", *Proceso*, No.594, 21 March 1988, p.11, 13.
- ¹⁷ Carlos Monsiváis, "Cárdenas, recibido en la UNAM y el IPN, como un esperanza", *Proceso*, No.604, 30 May 1988, pp.20-21.
- ¹⁸ Heberto Castillo, "Fuga y aprehensión en el 68", *Proceso*, No.106, 13 Nov. 1978, p.17.
- ¹⁹ Poniatowska, *La noche*, p.134; Maza, "El respeto sobrevive", p.20.
- ²⁰ Poniatowska, "Diez años después", p.19; Poniatowska, "No es que México", p.viii.
- ²¹ Víctor Avilés, "Para sobrevivir: Entrevista con Heberto Castillo", *Nexos*, No.121, Jan. 1988, p.84.
- ²² Heberto Castillo, "La campaña demostró que el pueblo confía más en Cuauhtémoc", *Proceso*, No.605, 6 June 1988, p.6.
- ²³ [N.A.], "Propuestas, tibeos, agresiones, precedieron al acuerdo de la izquierda", *Proceso*, No.605, 6 June 1988, p.7.
- ²⁴ Carr, "Mexico: The Perils of Unity", in Carr and Ellner, (eds.), *The Latin American Left*, pp.91-92.
- ²⁵ Naranjo, "Se pone cardiaco", *Proceso*, No.605, 6 June 1988, p.5.
- ²⁶ Krauze, "La comedia mexicana", pp.15-27; Krauze, "The Guerrilla Dandy", pp.28-38.
- ²⁷ Armando Ponce, "El ensayo de Krauze contra Fuentes, entre la desmitificación y el insulto", *Proceso*, No.612, 25 July 1988, p.50. Ponce quoted Adolfo Aguilar Zinser's view that both Gabriel Zaid and Paz had been accused of being the intellectual author of Krauze's essay. Hugo Hiriart, "¿Todos contra Krauze?", *La Jornada*, No.1386, 24 July 1988, p.7. Hiriart claimed that Krauze voiced the opinions

privately sustained by many about Fuentes's personality and work. Martin, *Journeys*, p.387. Martin, too, stated that Krauze was repeating what many had been secretly saying about Fuentes for years. Tittler, "Interview with Carlos Fuentes", p.53; Paz, "El diálogo y el ruido", pp.6-7. Fuentes endorsed the Sandinistas, whereas Paz was opposed to the revolutionary regime; Paz and Fuentes had differing attitudes towards Echeverría following the *Excelsior* coup.

²⁸ Antonio Marquet, "El acercamiento de Enrique Krauze a la literatura", *Plural*, No.204, Sept. 1988, pp.92, 94.

²⁹ Manuel Robles, "Krauze equipará el trato a Paz con el que recibio Vasconcelos", *Proceso*, No.728, 15 Oct. 1990, p.48.

³⁰ Octavio Paz, "La comedieta de Ponce", *Proceso*, No.1003, 22 Jan. 1996, p.23. Yet Paz could have disowned it: in 1995 Paz distanced himself from comments made against Poniatowska in *Vuelta* by Fabienne Bradu. In light of the Krauze/ Fuentes saga, Paz did not, perhaps, want to upset Poniatowska. See, Octavio Paz, "Aguafiestas", *Vuelta*, No.227, Oct. 1995, p.66; Fabienne Bradu, "Aguafiestas", *Vuelta*, No.227, Oct. 1995, pp.66-67; Elena Poniatowska, "Réplica", *Vuelta*, No.229, Dec. 1995, pp.60-62. Paz stated that his political differences with Poniatowska neither interfered with his appreciation of her work, nor altered his affection for her. In reply, Poniatowska thanked Paz for his support. *La Jornada* refused to publish Bradu's article, perhaps not wishing to offend one of its most popular contributors.

[N.A.], "Examen y critica de Carlos Fuentes", *Vuelta*, No.139, June 1988, p.16. An anonymous note was inset into Krauze's composition describing Fuentes as one of the most important figures in Hispanic culture and a regular contributor to *Vuelta*. It added, "por una coincidencia", reviews of Fuentes's *Cristóbal Nonato* also featured in the same edition. Adolfo Aguilar Zinser described the editor's note as malicious. See, Ponce, "El ensayo de Krauze", p.50. For the reviews of *Cristóbal Nonato* see, Adolfo Castañón, "Cristóbal Nonato de Carlos Fuentes", *Vuelta*, No.139, June 1988, pp.44-46; Julio Ortega, "Cristóbal Nonato de Carlos Fuentes", *Vuelta*, No.139, June 1988, pp.46-49. Both complimented Fuentes's latest novel, Ortega also praised Fuentes's earlier work.

³¹ Robles, "Krauze equipará el trato a Paz", p.48.

³² César Alberto Linares, "Fuentes: Su acta de defunción", *Siempre!*, No.1829, 13 July 1988, p.123.

³³ Manuel Camposeco, "Fuentes sigue siendo el mismo, cambió Krauze", *Punto*, No.296, 4 July 1988, p.2.

³⁴ Elías Chávez, "El PRI se empezó a derruir por dentro: Enrique Krauze", *Proceso*, No.608, 27 June 1988, pp.18, 22-23.

³⁵ Adolfo Aguilar Zinser, "Krauze vs. Fuentes: Ofensiva estratégica", *Excelsior*, No.25953, 1 July 1988, p.9.

³⁶ Among those who supported Fuentes was Fernando Benítez who dedicated an entire cultural supplement to Fuentes. It included praise from Gabriel García Márquez, and a tribute from Paz to Fuentes (taken from *Corriente alterna*, published in 1967). Benítez added that Paz was a great poet and essayist and the editor of the magazine in which Krauze's "libel" appeared. See *La Jornada Semanal*, No.197, 26 June 1988, pp.3, 5. Benítez also entered into a mini-polemic with Krauze in which he accused Krauze of being rancorous and incapable of literary criticism. Krauze denied personally attacking against Fuentes. See *La Jornada*, 19-22 July 1988, pp.2, 3.

Illustrating the polarising effect of the article, most of the *Vuelta* team supported Krauze. One dissenting voice was Ana María Icaza de Xirau, wife of *Vuelta*'s Ramón Xirau, who objected to the personal comments against Fuentes. See José de la Colina, "Asteriscos: Fuentes, Krauze, Benítez", *El Semanario Cultural de Novedades*, No.324, 3 July 1988, p.16; Ana María Icaza de Xirau, "Otra misiva a Krauze", *La Jornada*, No.1384, 22 July 1988, p.2.

It was not until October 1990 that Fuentes commented on Krauze's article. Interviewed by *Cambio 16*, Fuentes described his long friendship with Paz and acknowledged that relations between them were currently "malas". He explained, "a veces se cruzan cucarachas en el camino de la amistad. Cucarachas ambiciosas...". See, Gerardo Ochoa Sandy, "La polémica entre octavistas y carlistas", *Proceso*, No.750, 18 March 1991, pp.47-49.

³⁷ Enrique Vargas Anaya, "Carlos Monsiváis: Del fraude a lo ingobernable", *La Jornada Semanal*, No.197, 26 June 1988, p.11.

³⁸ Paz, *Posdata*, p.54; Monsiváis, "La represión como ideología", p.x; Poniatowska, *Nada, nadie*, p.266; Poniatowska, "La vida de miles", p.24.

³⁹ Vargas Anaya, "Carlos Monsiváis", p.11.

⁴⁰ Carlos Monsiváis, "La carta de renuncia de Muñoz Ledo al PRI, clave de su libro *Compromisos*", *Proceso*, No.608, 27 June 1988, p.19.

⁴¹ Monsiváis, "La carta de renuncia", p.20.

- ⁴² See photograph by Raúl Ortega, *La Jornada*, No.1369, 7 July 1988, p.19.
- ⁴³ Elías Cháves, "Jornadas de titubeos del secretario de Gobernación", *Proceso*, No.610, 11 July 1988, p.18.
- ⁴⁴ Carlos Monsiváis, "La confianza, en lucha con la desconfianza, une a opositoristas; cambia el domicilio del temor", *Proceso*, No.610, 11 July 1988, pp.18-19.
- ⁴⁵ Froylán M. López Narváez, "Ganó Cárdenas", *Proceso*, No.610, 11 July 1988, p.31. Cárdenas received a higher proportion of the vote in the provinces. See Teresa Gurza, "Cuauhtémoc 67.2% y Salinas 20.9%, en Michoacán, según el FDN", *La Jornada*, No.1371, 9 July 1988, p.1. These figures are based upon 61% of the Michoacán booths.
- ⁴⁶ [N.A.], [N.T.], *La Jornada*, No.1376, 14 July 1988, p.1. The official figures were as follows: Clouthier 17.07%; Salinas 50.36%; Cárdenas 31.12%. In the State of Chiapas the margin was higher, Salinas gained 89% of the vote; the number reached 95% in the town of Ocosingo, later to become an important Zapatista stronghold. See, Maite Rico, "Zapatistas contra el PRI", *El País*, No.6320, 22 Aug. 1994, p.2.
- ⁴⁷ Krauze, *Mexico*, p.770; Camp, *Politics in Mexico*, p.176. It is possible that Krauze kept quiet in 1988 as there was no proof of fraud. Krauze added no further clarification, leaving one to wonder how he became aware of the destruction of the records, that he claimed were, "hidden away in the cellars of the legislature".
- Writing at the same time, Camp maintained that although some believed Cárdenas gained the most votes, most felt that Salinas had won, albeit with a lower percentage than he was given.
- ⁴⁸ Declaración del Comité Ejecutivo Nacional de la Confederación Nacional de Organizaciones Populares", *La Jornada*, No.1386, 24 July 1988, p.11.
- ⁴⁹ José Agustín Ortiz Pinchetti, "Lectura de la democracia mexicana", *Nexos*, No.137, May 1989, p.27.
- ⁵⁰ Jaime Sánchez Susarrey, "La escena política: El 6 de julio", *Vuelta*, No.141, Aug. 1988, p.62.
- ⁵¹ Braulio Peralta, "Gradual e irreversible el camino a la democracia: Paz", *La Jornada*, No.1369, 7 July 1988, p.20.
- ⁵² Paz, "Hora cumplida", p.12.
- ⁵³ [N.A.], "Octavio Paz: Modernización, luego de elecciones", *Excelsior*, No.25964, 12 July 1988, Sección Cultural, p.1.
- ⁵⁴ Carlos Monsiváis, "Ya llegó, ya está aquí... (Crónica de una ratificación masiva)", *La Jornada*, No.1379, 17 July 1988, p.10.
- ⁵⁵ El Fisgón, "El ganador", *La Jornada*, No.1376, 14 July 1988, p.5; Naranjo, "Ganador", *Proceso*, No.611, 18 July 1988, p.5.
- ⁵⁶ John Mraz, "Tina Modotti in Mexico, 1923-30", University of Warwick, May 1997. It would not be until 1995 that Salinas again became the object of ridicule; this time throughout the Mexican press, and with the support of virtually the entire population.
- ⁵⁷ Carlos Monsiváis, "Lo que debió ser, relatado en un viaje por la utopía cívica", *Proceso*, No.618, 5 Sept. 1988, p.16.
- ⁵⁸ Ivani Vassoler, "México, en un periodo de transición democrática, como Brasil, Portugal y España, dice Octavio Paz", *Proceso*, No.612, 25 July 1988, p.30.
- ⁵⁹ M. Delal Baer, "Alternative Mexican Political Futures", in Edgar W. Butler and Jorge A. Bustamente, (eds.), *Sucesión Presidencial: The 1988 Presidential Election*, (Oxford, 1991), p.182. Delal Baer stated, "in the war of perceptions, many believe Cárdenas to have been the true victor of the election".
- ⁶⁰ Octavio Paz, "Historias de ayer /I", *La Jornada*, No.1403, 10 Aug. 1988, pp.1, 10. (My emphasis.)
- ⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p.10.
- ⁶² Paz, *Posdata*, p.35.
- ⁶³ Valdivieso, "Entre el tlatoani y el caudillo", p.ii.
- ⁶⁴ Paz, "A cinco años de Tlatelolco", p.329. Many might argue that this state of affairs was achieved in 1988.
- ⁶⁵ Wetz, "Entrevista con Octavio Paz", quoted in Rodríguez Castañeda, "Octavio Paz a *Le Monde*", p.16.
- ⁶⁶ Madrazo, "Historia y prehistoria de *Vuelta* /I", p.13.
- ⁶⁷ Paz, *One Earth*, p.172.
- ⁶⁸ MacAdam, "Octavio Paz: Tiempos, lugares", pp.16-17.
- ⁶⁹ Paz, "Historias de ayer", p.10.
- ⁷⁰ *La Jornada*, No.1403, 10 Aug. 1988, p.10. The meeting was to be held at 7.00 p.m. that evening.
- ⁷¹ Paz omitted to mention that this was a measure for which he had been calling for eighteen years, evidently without success.
- ⁷² Paz, *Posdata*, p.48.
- ⁷³ Octavio Paz, "Historias de ayer /II", *La Jornada*, No.1404, 11 Aug. 1988, pp.1, 12.
- ⁷⁴ Octavio Paz, "Entreluz: ¿Alba o crepúsculo? /III", *La Jornada*, No.1405, 12 Aug. 1988, pp.1, 8.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p.8.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p.8.

⁷⁷ Ugo Pipitone, "Una respuesta a Octavio Paz", *La Jornada*, No.1411, 18 Aug. 1988, p.15; Jordy Micheli, "Modernización, ese nuevo ogro filantrópico", *La Jornada*, No.1410, 17 Aug. 1988, perfil pp.iii-iv. Pipitone attacked Paz's views from behind an international screen, using the example of China to state his case. In "Historias de ayer /II", Paz likened plans to reform the PRI to the cases of China under Deng Xiaoping and the Soviet Union under Gorbachov. In criticising Paz, Micheli, too, focused upon overseas affairs, in particular, China, Spain and France.

⁷⁸ José Cueli, "Otra respuesta a Paz", *La Jornada*, No.1412, 19 Aug. 1988, p.27.

⁷⁹ Luis Javier Garrido, "Neblumo", *La Jornada*, No.1412, 19 Aug. 1988, p.7.

⁸⁰ Eduardo R. Huchim, "Cárdenas sin PRI: El todo y la nada de Octavio Paz", *Unomásuno*, No.3877, 18 Aug. 1988, p.6. Huchim quoted at length from Paz's article, explaining that he wanted to contextualise Paz's thoughts. It is also likely that Huchim was trying to avert an angry exchange with Paz. Paz often claimed that he was misquoted and his comments were taken out of context. Huchim himself likened the current political situation to 1810 and 1911, substantiating Paz's concern about an outbreak of violence and Krauze's preoccupation with a possible popular overthrow of government.

⁸¹ García Flores, "Aclarar los humos", p.iii.

⁸² Adolfo Gilly, "Carta a Octavio Paz", *La Jornada*, No.1415, 22 Aug. 1988, p.12.

⁸³ Superbarrio Gómez, "Un ring para superpaz", *La Jornada*, No.1416, 23 Aug. 1988, p.11.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p.11.

⁸⁵ Daniel Cazés, "Los discursos neopriistas", *La Jornada*, No.1416, 23 Aug. 1988, p.16. In the summer of 1988 Cazés published daily articles in *La Jornada* to commemorate the twentieth anniversary of the Student Movement. They formed part of a series "Han pasado 20 años". This essay was not from that collection.

⁸⁶ Octavio Paz, "Respuesta, réplicas y tapaboca", *La Jornada*, No.1419, 26 Aug. 1988, pp.1, 9.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p.9.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p.9.

⁸⁹ Paz, *The Labyrinth of Solitude*, p.3.

⁹⁰ Héctor Aguilar Camín, "Alba con nubes", *La Jornada*, No.1409, 16 Aug. 1988, pp.1, 11.

⁹¹ Fernando Benítez, "El verdadero reclamo", *La Jornada*, No.1410, 17 Aug. 1988, p.3.

⁹² Ignacio Carrión, "Carlos Fuentes y las ostras de Boston", *La Jornada Semanal*, No.188, 24 April 1988, p.9.

⁹³ Guadalupe Irizar, "México está cambiando, coinciden Fuentes, Azuela y Pacheco", *La Jornada*, No.1385, 23 July 1988, p.12.

⁹⁴ María Victoria Reyzábal, "Entre el enigma y la transparencia", *La Jornada Semanal*, No.14, 17 Sept. 1989, p.19.

⁹⁵ Braulio Peralta, "México, una democracia imperfecta: Carlos Fuentes", *La Jornada*, No.2202, 29 Oct. 1990, pp.1, 18.

⁹⁶ Fuentes, *Nuevo tiempo*, pp.74, 106.

⁹⁷ De la Vega, Rivera, Manzanos, Ponce y Terrazas, "Encuesta sobre las elecciones", p.59.

⁹⁸ Elena Poniatowska, "A propósito del homenaje a *La noche de Tlatelolco*", *La Jornada Semanal*, No.122, 13 Oct. 1991, p.36.

⁹⁹ Vega, "Poniatowska: ante el sismo", p.23.

¹⁰⁰ Poniatowska, *Nada nadie*, p.98.

¹⁰¹ Vega, "Poniatowska: ante el sismo", p.23.

¹⁰² Adriano Maldivo, "Elena Poniatowska, Cristina Pacheco y Carlos Monsiváis comentan sobre los libros que escribieron entonces", *La Jornada*, No.3963, 19 Sept. 1995.

¹⁰³ Monsiváis would confront Paz's views, however: in 1977, for example, he sustained a lengthy polemic with Paz that began as a discussion of the different aspects of socialism. Monsiváis initiated it following remarks made by Paz about *La Cultura en México*, and stated that he fundamentally disagreed with Paz's view of Mexican reality. So eloquently did Monsiváis argue his case, that the polemic was described by Herrera Cruz as Monsiváis's "mayoría de edad". See, Carlos Monsiváis, "Respuesta a Octavio Paz", *Proceso*, No.59, 19 Dec. 1977, pp.39-41; Octavio Paz, "Aclaraciones y reiteraciones", *Proceso*, No.61, 2 Jan. 1978, pp.29-31; Carlos Monsiváis, "Rectificaciones y relecturas: y sin embargo lo dijo", *Proceso*, No.62, 9 Jan. 1978, pp.31-34; Octavio Paz, "Repaso y despedida", *Proceso*, No.63, 16 Jan. 1978, pp.31-33; Carlos Monsiváis, "Recapitulación y conclusiones a cargo del lector", *Proceso*, No.64, 23 Jan. 1978, pp.31-32. Ignacio Herrera Cruz, "El cuarto de siglo (en estereo)", *La Cultura en México*, No.1297, 11 Feb. 1987, p.38.

¹⁰⁴ Carlos Monsiváis, "A 20 años del 26 de julio", *La Jornada*, No.1388, 26 July 1988, p.1.

- ¹⁰⁵ Monsiváis, "Ya llegó", pp.1, 10.
- ¹⁰⁶ Monsiváis, "A 20 años", p.11. See also: Carlos Monsiváis, "Aclaración", *La Jornada*, No.1389, 27 July 1988, p.2.
- ¹⁰⁷ "Declaración del Comité Ejecutivo Nacional", p.11. See footnote 48, above.
- ¹⁰⁸ Carlos Monsiváis, "Notas sobre la campaña de 1988 /I", *La Jornada*, No.1374, 12 July 1988, pp.1, 8.
- ¹⁰⁹ Carlos Monsiváis, "Notas sobre la campaña de 1988 /II", *La Jornada*, No.1375, 13 July 1988, p.17.
- ¹¹⁰ Carlos Monsiváis, "Notas sobre la campaña de 1988 /III", *La Jornada*, No.1376, 14 July 1988, p.6.
- ¹¹¹ Carlos Monsiváis, "La defensa de la esperanza /I", *La Jornada*, No.1429, 5 Sept. 1988, p.9.
- ¹¹² Carlos Monsiváis, "La defensa de la esperanza /II", *La Jornada*, No.1430, 6 Sept. 1988, p.15.
- ¹¹³ *Ibid.*, p.15.
- ¹¹⁴ Brewster, interview with Monsiváis, 1996. Commenting upon the current situation, Monsiváis admitted, "the first necessity is the elimination of the PRI. It has been there for too long, there's too much corruption, too much repression. [...] It wouldn't matter if the PAN came to power, as long as the PRI goes."
- ¹¹⁵ Carlos Monsiváis, "La defensa de la esperanza /III", *La Jornada*, No.1431, 7 Sept. 1988, p.13.
- ¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p.13.
- ¹¹⁷ Hermenegildo Castro, "Llama Cárdenas a fortalecer y ampliar la organización popular", *La Jornada*, No.1436, 12 Sept. 1988, p.8.
- ¹¹⁸ Carlos Monsiváis, "La propaganda y la sociedad abierta", *La Jornada*, No.1437, 13 Sept. 1988, p.12.
- ¹¹⁹ Carlos Monsiváis, "Cadena de promesas", *Proceso*, No.631, 5 Dec. 1988, pp.38-39.
- ¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, p.39.
- ¹²¹ *Ibid.*, p.39.
- ¹²² Handelman, *Mexican Politics*, p.82.
- ¹²³ Pacheco, "México 1972", p.25.
- ¹²⁴ Ruy Sánchez, *Una introducción*, p.105.
- ¹²⁵ Bartra, "Nacionalismo, democracia y socialismo", p.38.
- ¹²⁶ Castañeda, *Utopia Unarmed*, pp.340-341.
- ¹²⁷ [N.A.], "El capitalismo es responsable de la miseria en que viven muchas naciones: Jesús Ortega", *Unomásuno*, No.4610, 31 Aug. 1990, p.6.
- ¹²⁸ José Luquín, "Octavio Paz y el cacareo doméstico", *Unomásuno*, No.4619, 9 Sept. 1990, p.29.
- ¹²⁹ Enrique González Rojo (1990), quoted in Rodríguez Ledesma, *El pensamiento político*, p.414.
- ¹³⁰ Christopher Domínguez Michael, "El pensamiento político de Octavio Paz, las trampas de la ideología de Xavier Rodríguez Ledesma", *Vuelta*, No.236, July 1996, p.35.
- ¹³¹ Paz, *One Earth*, p.126.

6. The Presidency of Carlos Salinas de Gortari

Riding out the storm: 1988-1993

Las dudas persisten. Carlos Monsiváis, December 1988.¹

Once in office, President Salinas embarked upon an ostensibly impressive anti-corruption campaign, and promoted a series of popular participation programmes. Roger Bartra stated, "a la raíz de la sucia manipulación de las elecciones de 1988, el gobierno mexicano realizó enormes esfuerzos por limpiar su imagen en el espejo de la política internacional".² In early 1989 the powerful oil workers' union leader, Joaquín Hernández Galicia ("La Quina") was arrested and charged with murder: a move that, Armando Ponce explained, was sufficient to canonise Salinas in Mexico.³ Philip Russell stressed that Salinas's strong stance also served to weaken the opposition. He pointed out that La Quina had almost certainly helped to finance Cárdenas's electoral campaign. As Poniatowska observed, changing the leadership did not end union corruption: La Quina was replaced by his "moral twin brother". Yet those who voiced reservations were in the minority: artists and intellectuals, among them Paz, signed a public statement in support of Salinas's action.⁴ Salinas became the man of change; Cárdenas, who had opposed the imprisonment of La Quina on the grounds of interference in union affairs, became associated with "violence, communism, drug trafficking and incompetence".⁵ Salinas announced the launch of Pronasol, also known as Solidaridad, a programme that encouraged communities, together with government support, to effect public works of direct local benefit. Through this scheme Salinas forged, "a type of paternalistic, populist appeal unmatched by his predecessors". Spending was immense: by 1993, M\$33 billion had been spent on Solidaridad schemes.⁶ In so doing, some of Cárdenas's supporters were harnessed: many of the urban

movements that emerged after the earthquakes became attached to the PRI by Solidaridad funding, thus further weakening and isolating Cárdenas.⁷ Salinas aimed to cultivate the support of rural communities and urban slums:⁸ the areas designated by Monsiváis as the central elements of neocardenismo.⁹ Rather than a genuine concern for the poor, Neil Harvey maintained that Salinas aimed to divert attention from his "highly questionable" electoral victory.¹⁰

In the early months of his presidency, Salinas effectively silenced the Right with an economic programme that emphasised privatisation and promised to propel the nation into the First World. The middle class was appeased by the end of import restrictions and a strong peso.¹¹ Salinas "modernised" relations with the Church by inviting its leaders to his inauguration ceremony and appointing a personal representative to the Vatican.¹² The PRI would be gradually reformed, but Salinas's priority was the economy. The signing of the TLC with the United States and Canada, to take effect on 1 January 1994, was deemed to be the height of his presidency. Yet concern was voiced that not everyone would gain from the government policies: *Business Week* warned that benefits tended to go to those close to Salinas and that the rich were becoming wealthier.¹³ In 1992 Krauze stated that Solidaridad "corrupted democracy". He explained, "Salinas bestows fair elections and electricity as if they were favors not rights".¹⁴ Was Krauze aware of the shallow nature of the president's policies? If so, he restricted his comments to the US press. At home, Salinas's tactics were more successful. Luis Pazos was a staunch supporter: "The main beneficiaries of privatisation will be the 85 million Mexicans who will receive better services and who will be free from inflation and currency devaluation, which every day impoverish

them.”¹⁵ In early 1992, *Nexos* reported much optimism in Mexico and overwhelming endorsement for Salinas’s policies.¹⁶

The intellectual community was also incorporated. In keeping with his pre-election professed commitment to culture, just one week after taking office Salinas established the Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes (CNCA) also known as Conaculta. The left-wing Víctor Flores Olea was named president. It was stressed that all members’ political opinions would be respected.¹⁷ Actress Susana Alexander perhaps spoke for many as she explained the group’s apparent contradiction: “Soy simpatizadora de Cárdenas. [...] Era mi candidato preferido. Pero soy bastante escéptica en muchas cosas y Salinas va a gobernar.”¹⁸ Monsiváis agreed that most intellectuals endorsed Salinas because there was no sense of any alternative: “They accepted Salinas after the electoral fraud of 1988 [...] because they felt they had no choice. They accepted Salinas because they were accustomed to a lack of alternatives. If you can’t beat them, join them.” Salinas, he continued, exploited these sentiments: “Salinas was a **seducer** of intellectuals. [...] He invited them to all his tours; he frequently invited them to eat at Los Pinos; he discussed many things with them (pre-arranged discussions); he was eager to win their confidence, their sympathy and their understanding. Salinas was a Don Juan of intellectuals.”¹⁹

Paz was an early conquest: in 1989 he described the government as “tolerante, se habla todo el tiempo de pluralismo”.²⁰ Ignoring the controversial election, he stated that Salinas was capable of completing the democratic transition.²¹ Paz was soon, in Jorge Castañeda’s words, “as adamant a defender of the new PRI authoritarian regime as he had been a critic of the old one”.²² Like President Echeverría, Salinas included

intellectuals in the political forum. In March 1989, the Fondo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes (FNCA) was established, Paz was among its members.²³ Salinas offered Paz the posts of Ambassador to France and Spain.²⁴ Salinas founded a Human Rights Commission; included in its advisory council were Fuentes, editor of *Nexos*, Héctor Aguilar Camín, and director-general of *La Jornada*, Carlos Payán.²⁵

Reflecting Paz's comments that the PRI victory of 1988 was the culmination of a twenty-year struggle for democratic change, Salinas offered government posts to the generation of 68. In May 1992 former student leader Gilberto Guevara Niebla was named Secretary for Education. Guevara Niebla had spent nearly three years in prison under Presidents Díaz Ordaz and Echeverría.²⁶ Among Guevara Niebla's duties was updating the Mexican history text books: for the first time the Tlatelolco massacre was included. Although no blame was apportioned, the scant details proclaimed that the government took a hard line against the students, the CU was invaded by the military, and the Army broke up a meeting at Tlatelolco at which there were many deaths.²⁷ In 1990, the film *Rojo amanecer*, a dramatisation of the massacre directed by Jorge Fons, was released. It was a huge box-office success.

Animosities and aspersions: *El Siglo XX: La Experiencia de la Libertad* and the *Coloquio de Invierno*

Las opiniones políticas - que son en lo profundo opiniones morales - pueden sellar o disolver una amistad. Enrique Krauze, 1990.²⁸

En el mundo intelectual las querellas son inevitables. Octavio Paz, 1992.²⁹

In 1978 Paz described the closed nature of the intellectual world: "If you belong to one group you cannot exchange ideas in another group's journal. [...] We have a name for

this in Mexico, *ninguneo*, a word which refers to the policy of never mentioning someone's name in the history of art or literature."³⁰ Rather than end this tradition, Paz apparently preferred to extend it. The 1990 *Vuelta* conference, "El siglo XX: La experiencia de la libertad", organised by Paz and Krauze, demonstrated the depths of the polarisation instigated by Krauze's attack on Fuentes two years earlier. Against the background of the fall of the Berlin Wall and the disintegration of the Soviet Empire, it examined the end of Marxism. Critics described the conference as "de absoluta derecha".³¹ Members of the public were forbidden access, and exclusive television rights were given to the government-sponsored *Televisa*. As Paz explained, invitations were selective: "No invitamos a seudointelectuales que han sido cómplices de los tiranos". Voicing what was surely a contradiction, Krauze added, "no se puede ser plural invitando a los antipluralistas". Confirmation of their idea of plurality could be seen in Krauze's justification for holding the meeting behind closed doors: "No quiero que el diálogo vaya a romperse por la gritería del público."³² Indeed, those absent were more striking than those present, most specifically, Fuentes.³³ The two token representatives of the Left, Arnaldo Córdova and Monsiváis, were impeded from giving their views. Córdova commented, "todavía me estoy preguntando para qué diablos me invitaron si no querían que hablara". In his paper, Monsiváis divided Mexican intellectuals into two: fanatics of the Left, and those situated within the government who passionately favoured the market economy. Although derisive of both categories, Monsiváis berated the latter's failure to criticise those in power; a stance that Paz interpreted as a personal attack.³⁴ Paz contested Monsiváis without giving him the opportunity to reply.³⁵ Resorting to publishing his comments in *La Jornada*, Monsiváis explained that Paz had misunderstood him; he tried several times to clarify his position, but was prevented because Paz's word was final.³⁶

Paz's attitude was the topic of much discussion. At the meeting Mario Vargas Llosa described Mexican politics as "the perfect dictatorship", causing a rift between the two men; Vargas Llosa hastily departed Mexico "for family reasons".³⁷ Paz was perhaps particularly incensed by Vargas Llosa's reference to the State's practice of bribing intellectuals with commissions, nominations and public duties.³⁸ PRD member Arnoldo Martínez Verdugo stated, "Paz ha transitado de la opinión crítica y justa en 1968, al dogmatismo primitivo y la apología presidencial en 1990. [...] Ellos (él y Krauze) siempre quieren decir la última palabra. En un debate eso no es democracia. Es despotismo."³⁹ Poniatowska agreed, "el que se mete contigo siempre sale magullado, desgredado, moreteado [...] siempre has de tener la última palabra".⁴⁰ She expressed disappointment that only those from the *Vuelta* group were allowed fully to voice their views.⁴¹ Luis Cardoza y Aragón accused Paz of being totalitarian, and blind to the role played by the United States in exacerbating Latin American conflicts.⁴² According to Enrique Maza, Paz interpreted any criticism of the topics raised as personal insults. He rapped Vargas Llosa on the head, poured scorn on Monsiváis and admonished Krauze when, in partial agreement with Vargas Llosa, he described the Mexican political system as "una dictablanda".⁴³ Fernando del Paso summed up Paz's sensitivity: "Al Poeta se le puede herir hasta con el aliento de una rosa."⁴⁴

PRD member Jesús Ortega regretted Paz's lack of criticism of the current Mexican regime, adding that Paz's comments lacked credibility due to his silence about the manipulation of the 1988 election. He alleged that Paz was attempting to secure "algún premio", como el Nobel".⁴⁵ The suggestion, first raised following Krauze's attack on Fuentes, was repeated in the following days. Néstor de Buen visualised a

contest: "Imagínense ustedes una final de Octavio Paz vs. Carlos Fuentes por, digamos, el Premio Nobel de Literatura, a tres sets o a 18 hoyos, con muerte súbita y multas por mal comportamiento."⁴⁶ De Buen's metaphor underlined an important factor in the relationship between the two men: although their attitudes towards Mexican politics were not substantially different in 1990, an intense personal rivalry had developed.⁴⁷ Both Paz and Fuentes were on good terms with Salinas; both had been Mexican ambassadors; both were cosmopolitan, highly acclaimed literary figures; both coveted the Nobel; yet only one of them could be nominated.⁴⁸ In the 1950s and 60s Paz had been Fuentes's mentor, guide and friend; their bond, although genuine, was based upon the assumption of Paz's supremacy. As Fuentes matured and followed his own course, Paz appeared to find it difficult to sustain a relationship as equals: were their ambitions too close?⁴⁹ It was, perhaps, a coincidence that Paz was awarded the Nobel Prize in October 1990. A radiant Paz claimed he had never aspired to such a prestigious honour. On hearing the news, Fuentes congratulated the poet; Paz referred to Fuentes as his much loved friend. Referring to the murmurs of government involvement in the nomination process, Paz denied that he was tied to political power stressing, "la mía ha sido una actitud independiente". Paz then spoke of the need for intellectuals' critical vision, but praised recent reforms in Mexico.⁵⁰

The truce was short-lived: the "Coloquio de Invierno", a response to the *Vuelta* convention, was already being organised.⁵¹ The Coloquio, initiated by *Nexos* and chaired by Flores Olea, and José Sarukhán Kérmez, Rector of UNAM, was to run from 10 to 21 February 1992. Sub-titled, "Los grandes cambios de nuestro tiempo", the Coloquio examined the problems of the new world order. Around one hundred people from different countries were invited; Fuentes would open the conference with his

paper, "La situación mundial y democracia". Paz was belatedly asked to participate, and only after he had protested about his exclusion. Krauze's presence was never requested; as a result, it was suggested, of his article against Fuentes.⁵² Rumours abounded: that Paz spoke to Salinas about his exclusion, but the president would not intervene;⁵³ that Paz asked Salinas to suspend the conference and demanded the resignation of Flores Olea;⁵⁴ that following a consultation with Paz, Salinas encouraged the two quarrelling sides to settle their differences.⁵⁵ Deeply hurt and offended, Paz boycotted the Coloquio on the basis that it was organised "de modo unilateral".⁵⁶ Krauze stated that it was marred by a, "marcada unanimidad ideológica".⁵⁷ Both Paz and Krauze had apparently forgotten the charges of partiality levied against their meeting. Although the conference was a success, the absent Paz was nonetheless a strong presence.⁵⁸ On the eve of the Coloquio, Paz resigned from the Comisión de Literatura del Fondo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes. In an open letter to Flores Olea, Paz stated that the CNCA, to which Paz's Comisión was affiliated, had been converted into, "un organismo más y más burocrático, [...] su acción ha sido paulatinamente viciada por la parcialidad, el favoritismo y la política de cooptación y neutralización de las voces independientes".⁵⁹ Interviewed on the first day of the Coloquio, a visibly uncomfortable Fuentes refused to comment about Paz.⁶⁰

Paz claimed that he refused to attend the Coloquio for moral considerations. Clearly angered, he gave a detailed explanation in *Vuelta*. His choice of publication is interesting: usually Paz staged his polemics in *La Jornada* and *Proceso*. Paz presumably felt sure of the support of his magazine's readers, giving the impression that he was seeking sympathy; or did he fear that they, too, might "desert" him? He stressed the pluralistic nature of the *Vuelta* conference and that, unlike the Coloquio, it had not

used public funds. Paz's main contention was that individual writers were excluded from the government-sponsored Coloquio.⁶¹ He expanded the theme the following month, emphasising "no es una querrela de personas", but immediately contradicted himself by recalling the burning of his effigy in 1984; a lynching that he claimed was repeated at the Coloquio. Paz described the meeting as, "El Coloquio de Hibernación Intelectual" and "El Coloquio de los Incurables".⁶²

Alejandro Toledo explained that the *Vuelta* conference and the Coloquio illustrated two visions of Mexican reality, represented by Paz on the centre-right, and Fuentes, of the centre-left. For Toledo, "importa la discusión de ideas, no el berrinche ni el insulto".⁶³ The tantrums, however, tended to dominate: Efrén's cartoon of a badly damaged pen illustrated the depth of passions.⁶⁴ Castañeda stated that although the intellectual wrangles may seem "puerile, even absurd" to others, what was at stake was Mexico's "soul and direction". Thus debates became "savage" and "cannibalistic".⁶⁵ As discussed in chapter one, intellectuals regularly disagree: "They may [...] constitute a cohesive, self-conscious collectivity (an intelligentsia), united by a common commitment to well-defined values, or they may remain a disparate, ill-defined agglomeration of squabbling sages."⁶⁶ In the conferences of 1990 and 1992, Mexican intellectuals fell into the latter category. In Foucault's words, the polemicist's opponent, "is not a partner in the search for the truth, but an adversary, an enemy who is wrong, who is harmful and whose very existence constitutes a threat". Foucault stressed the unproductive nature of polemics: "Speakers are not encouraged to advance their argument, but to defend their legitimacy."⁶⁷ Héctor Rivera pointed out, "cuando de polémicas se trata, la serenidad no es precisamente el mayor de los dones de Octavio Paz. Aunque más prudente, Carlos Fuentes no se queda atrás."⁶⁸ Monsiváis was more



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forthright, claiming that the Coloquio revealed the intellectual world to be, “desbordante en golpes bajos, intereses mezquinos, politiquerías y vanidades”.⁶⁹

José Agustín explained that despite their professed differences, the *Vuelta* and *Nexos* groups were very similar; both were competing for presidential favours. Paz’s attainment of the Nobel Prize, Agustín added, had given *Vuelta* the “lead”, but the Coloquio de Invierno redressed the balance. Yet rather than enrich Mexican culture, Agustín concluded this competitiveness revealed, “una alarmante inmadurez e indigencia moral”.⁷⁰ Agustín perceived the situation to have arisen from a government change of stance: initially Salinas had been closer to *Vuelta* due to its support of neoliberal policies; the president’s subsequent move towards social liberalism had placed him in the *Nexos* camp.⁷¹ Alberto Ruy Sánchez, who participated in both conferences, underlined the difficulty for outsiders to understand why two apparently similar groups such as *Vuelta* and *Nexos* could so vociferously disagree. In Ruy Sánchez’s view this was a personal dispute that had been aggravated by Krauze: first by attacking Fuentes in 1988, and then for suggesting, “Fuentes y García Márquez no fueron invitados [al encuentro de *Vuelta*] porque no son intelectuales”. Ruy Sánchez continued, “las cosas son más complicadas de lo que parecen en esta batalla de ideologías, grupos y personas”, and lamented “nuestro canibalismo”.⁷²

The “complications” thickened: on 27 February 1992, less than a week after the Coloquio ended, Flores Olea was sacked as president of the CNCA. Although he strongly denied it, many believed that Paz was behind this development. Efrén depicted a stern faced Paz pulling a chair away from Flores Olea.⁷³ Salinas was perhaps reluctant to make a direct choice between the *Vuelta* and *Nexos* groups, preferring to keep the



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loyalty of both. Flores Olea was a scapegoat.⁷⁴ Fuentes was one of the few to praise Flores Olea's work at Conaculta. In a rare strike against Paz, he continued, "existe un terrorismo de derecha [...] y marionetas intelectuales que hablan por ellos". Fuentes then contradicted himself claiming that he was unaware of any intrigue surrounding Flores Olea's dismissal: "No estaba en México en esos días".⁷⁵ Clearly Fuentes wished to distance himself from further involvement. Paz, conversely, claimed to thrive upon disputes: "nadar contra la corriente fortalece el ánimo y rejuvenece al espíritu".⁷⁶ Yet he overlooked the probability of becoming embittered by the constant quarrels, and that his public image and relationships with his peers would suffer. Paz was seen as increasingly belligerent and remote; the breach between the once close friends, Paz and Fuentes, would never be reconciled.

Juan Bañuelos perceived the intellectual battles to be a struggle for cultural control within the political power structure: "Se trata de la rebatinga en el cacicazgo cultural en México."⁷⁷ Certainly there were few critics of government policy: Juan José Hinojosa emphasised that Salinas was coopting rather than promoting intellectuals.⁷⁸ Gerardo Ochoa Sandy agreed, "[los intelectuales] exhortan, surgieren, legitiman. Pero no mandan. Las decisiones las toman otros. Los del equipo del presidente Salinas."⁷⁹ Monsiváis stressed, "se ve a Conaculta [...] como puente privilegiado entre Salinas de Gortari y los intelectuales. No lo es, y al régimen sólo circunstancialmente le atañe el gremio, pero la impresión inicial perdura."⁸⁰ Salinas's attempts to court the intellectual community may have been successful but, rather than invite debate and criticism into the political arena, he was following a divide and rule strategy. If Salinas intended to exploit intellectual rivalries, intellectuals appeared to be more than willing to cooperate.

Charges of restricted access to the conferences notwithstanding; these squabbles occurred in the public sphere. The media, as M'Hammed Sabour pointed out, provides [intellectuals] with opportunities to build reputations and gain publicity, but similarly it may embroil them in trivialization, vulgarization and 'intellectual prostitution'. And this [...] may result in the loss of intellectual credibility and respectability which are the essence of any intellectual autonomy.⁸¹

The media may distort and misrepresent intellectuals' views, but in the early 1990s it was deliberately used by individuals to state their claims. Monsiváis's reply to Paz; Paz's reasons for not attending the Coloquio; Paz's letter to Flores Olea and Paz's resignation were all sent directly to the press, not to mention numerous interviews and comments. While the arguments may seem "puerile, even absurd" from a distance, they illustrate the connections between intellectuals and Salinas, and the lengths taken by intellectuals to ensure they remained in favour.

Tlatelolco, 2 October 1993

En estos 25 años los dirigentes del movimiento estudiantil de 1968 [...] modificamos al país, hemos hecho partidos, sindicatos, publicaciones, leyes, cambios sociales y políticos. México es otro ... el parteaguas ... la épica del 68 ... la tragedia. No pudimos levantar un monumento a las víctimas, pero lo hemos levantado a nosotros mismos: nunca nos dejamos transar, fuimos la imagen de la [...] honestidad juvenil contra la torva maldad del gobierno. Luis González de Alba, 1993.⁸²

Fuimos y somos leales a nuestro sueño y estamos convencidos de tener razón. CNH members, August 1993.⁸³

To distance the PRI of the present from that of the past, formal recognition was finally given to the victims of Tlatelolco. On 2 October 1993, amid strict security, two marches left the Plaza de la Constitución for Tlatelolco. At 6.00 p.m., a monument was

unveiled at the Plaza de las Tres Culturas.⁸⁴ Among the thousands present were Monsiváis and Poniatowska.⁸⁵

Monsiváis demanded answers to the movement's violent end: "¿Qué sucedió exactamente en Tlatelolco? [...] ¿Quiénes preparon la matanza y el ocultamiento del número de muertos? ¿Quiénes se beneficiaron de la demencia autoritaria de Díaz Ordaz?"⁸⁶ Two months later, Monsiváis was invited by ex-student leaders to become a member of the "Comisión de la Verdad" to investigate the events of the summer of 1968. It proved to be a frustrating assignment. The commission sought permission from Díaz Ordaz's family for access to his private archive; it requested the testimonies of sixteen functionaries who had served in 1968; and asked *Televisa*, *Excélsior*, *La Prensa*, *El Universal*, *Ovaciones*, and *Siempre!* to consult their records. There were also calls for information from the US ambassador, and demands for Echeverría to take the stand.⁸⁷ Not one of those contacted deigned to reply.⁸⁸ The editors of the periodicals had all changed since 1968 and in the cases of *Excélsior* and *Siempre!* their political stance had altered beyond recognition.

The commission's main priorities were to gather documents, to obtain testimonies from all those involved, and to draw general conclusions based on this evidence.⁸⁹ When asked what would happen if the government refused to open the archives, Monsiváis replied,

al no abrirse los archivos del 68 lo que ahora está en cuestión es si realmente tenemos libertad de información. [...] No creo que llegue muy lejos, porque no hay archivos ni documentación. Hay muchos testimonios, pero no hay archivos. Se sabe con detalle la parte de la víctima, pero del verdugo no se sabe.⁹⁰

Monsiváis explained that the commission's task was to establish what had happened, not to apportion blame: "para que acontecimientos así no se repitan". Those responsible would be judged "en el próximo libro de texto de historia".⁹¹

Salinas's apparent openness proved to be a superficial gesture: Secretario de Gobernación, Patrocinio González Garrido, stated that in accordance with "reglamentación internacional" the archives would be opened in 1998.⁹² Proclaiming that such action violated the right to information as set out in Article 6 of the Mexican Constitution, Monsiváis observed: "González Garrido antepone una reglamentación internacional sobre un derecho a la información. ¿Cuál es la racionalidad?"⁹³ Surrounding the topic of the Tlatelolco massacre, rationality had never been a factor. Sonia Morales reported that even if access were made available, it was unlikely that any new information would be revealed. In 1968 the director of the UNAM archive had been ordered to destroy everything to do with the Student Movement. Records of that time were reduced to "un paquetito".⁹⁴

Krauze nonetheless stated that Salinas's advances were accepted by many "con buena fe".⁹⁵ Monsiváis illustrated the popularity of Salinas's strategy:

It was an incredible time. Rational, intelligent people were really in love with Salinas's ideas and Salinas's attitude. They thought, "wow, we are made, for the first time we are going to the First World". [...] Salinas was the image of modernity, he was a sincere man, a winner, a born winner, he was impressing the world - a lot of rubbish! That's what they believed and the belief in modernity, not money, was the keeper of intellectuals' hearts. [...] I was alone in all those years. I decided not to join them because I couldn't help remembering the fraud. [...] In December 1993 I felt so depressed, so impotent; I felt a political failure. [...] Why couldn't anyone else see what was happening?⁹⁶

On 31 December 1993, Salinas seemed to be invincible: he had successfully ridden the electoral storm and for five years had convinced the majority of Mexican people of his worth. The economy was apparently flourishing; the intellectual community was competing for favours; Salinas enjoyed considerable popular support, and had managed to distance his government from involvement in the Tlatelolco massacre. Yet it proved to be the peak of his power; rebellion in Chiapas, and the collapse of the economic system would force a revision. Monsiváis's apparently solitary sojourn in the political wilderness of anti-salinismo would reap rewards as Salinas's empire began to disintegrate.

The Zapatista uprising, January to July 1994

Leer lo que ocurre en Chiapas no nos convierte en una sociedad de guerrilleros, ni leer a Octavio Paz nos convierte en poetas. Jordy Micheli, March 1994.⁹⁷

During the night of 31 December 1993 masked forces quietly entered and took control of the Chiapas highland towns of San Cristóbal de Las Casas, Ocosingo, Altamirano and Las Margaritas. Former governor Absalón Castellanos was taken hostage. Staging their rebellion on the eve of the ratification of the TLC indicated the Zapatistas' intention to use the world media to highlight their cause. The international spotlight was already focused upon the American continent. Salinas's economic and modernisation policies had appeared successfully to have elevated Mexico to first-world status; the Republic was a model of prosperity and stability. To the acute embarrassment of the Federal government, the EZLN shattered this illusion overnight. Mexico's international credit was damaged and the *Bolsa* fell.⁹⁸ Salinas's response was swift: Federal troops were

deployed to Chiapas and heavy fighting took place; by 5 January the Army had regained control of the region. Official figures listed ninety-three deaths.

The unrest was said to have taken the country by surprise. Yet discontent had been apparent in Chiapas for some time: in 1983 campesinos directly appealed to President De la Madrid to intervene following attacks by State police.⁹⁹ In May 1989 chiapaneco poet Juan Bañuelos drew attention to fourteen political assassinations in Chiapas that took place during Salinas's first hundred days in office. He stressed, "esto en cualquier otro país hubiera suscitado un levantamiento en el que estarían involucrados los escritores, los intelectuales, los artistas; en cambio, en nuestro medio pasa como si sucediera en un país extranjero". Since 1979, Bañuelos added, 153 indigenous people had been assassinated, 327 campesinos had disappeared, 692 had been detained and 503 imprisoned and tortured.¹⁰⁰ If Bañuelos hoped to goad intellectuals into responding he was disappointed. Three years later Salinas amended Article 27 of the Constitution enabling communal lands to be sold to national or foreign purchasers; raising fears that overseas investors would buy ejido land. In response, 400 Indians marched from Palenque to Mexico City and back, a distance of 1106 kilometres. The event attracted much public sympathy, but neither Salinas nor Governor of Chiapas Patrocinio González Garrido reacted to their plea.¹⁰¹ Salinas denied any prior knowledge of the presence of guerrillas in Chiapas;¹⁰² but in 1993 *Proceso* had reported an outbreak of fighting near Ocosingo. A letter from the Secretary of Defence dated 31 May described an attack on military personnel; ten armed Indians were detained. A few days later, however, the Federal Army left the area. The EZLN spokesman, Subcomandante Marcos, subsequently claimed this was the Zapatista training camp in the Lacandón Jungle from which the attacks of 1 January 1994 were launched. He

contended that Salinas ordered the withdrawal to ensure that the TLC was not jeopardised.¹⁰³ If this was the case, several issues arise: were intelligence sources in the area inefficient and hence misinterpreted the potential scale of the revolt? Did Salinas underestimate the conditions in Chiapas that led so many to rebel? Or was it a case of disregarding indigenous discontent that badly misfired? Marcos wryly observed that before 1994 most Mexicans were unaware of the precise location of Chiapas, let alone understood its specific problems.¹⁰⁴ Roderic Camp maintained that the presence of the EZLN was known "long before" the uprising, but the government "either chose to ignore it" or decided to "delay resolving festering conflicts in the region". He identified three main reasons for the rebellion: the amendment to Article 27, the drop in campesinos' incomes, and their lack of political voice.¹⁰⁵

As in 1968 the Army used force against its own people, but this time it was under the scrutiny of the national and foreign press. Reports of children carrying wooden replica guns being shot by Federal troops caused outrage; marches were staged throughout the country calling for an end to the violence. To defuse tension, Salinas adopted the posture used by Díaz Ordaz: the chiapanecos were victims of a foreign conspiracy; like the students in 1968, it was said that those who joined the EZLN had been manipulated into taking up arms.¹⁰⁶ "Evidence" of Central American involvement was produced: Guatemalan clothing, and weapons from El Salvador were reportedly found in the conflict zone.¹⁰⁷ For further "proof", Salinas emphasised that the EZLN spokesman was not Indian. Although little had been seen of the face behind the balaclava, Marcos was described as having blonde hair, green eyes, and able to speak four languages.¹⁰⁸ In the rush to expose his identity, anyone remotely resembling that description was a target. On 6 January "Subcomandante Marcos" was arrested in

Ocosingo: tall, green-eyed Venezuelan ornithologist, Peter Picher Garrido, was held and interrogated for eight hours by "very nervous and almost desperate people" before being released.¹⁰⁹ After scanning guerrilla records, on 11 January *Excelsior* published a photograph of Marcos Rojas, a veteran of the Nicaraguan Revolution, explaining that investigations were underway to establish if he was the Zapatista spokesman.¹¹⁰

Unable to substantiate any foreign involvement, Salinas had the additional problem of countering the Zapatistas' insistence of their Mexican citizenship. The Zapatistas affirmed they were not trying to destroy national aspirations for modernity and prosperity; they merely wanted to be included. By taking the name of Emiliano Zapata, the revolutionary hero who had fought under the banner "tierra y libertad", the EZLN placed itself firmly within the bounds of the Mexican national identity. The choice was particularly apt: a portrait of the agrarian leader adorned the presidential office; both Salinas and his successor, Ernesto Zedillo Ponce de León, have sons named Emiliano. How could Salinas profess empathy with Zapata's ideals when campesinos in Chiapas claimed to be suffering exploitation under his government?

The escalation of the fighting shocked the public. Numerous essays and letters of protest were published.¹¹¹ Spanish artists and intellectuals petitioned Salinas, reminding him of his duty to defend all his citizens and to respect human rights in Chiapas.¹¹² As in the aftermath of the earthquakes, intellectuals came to the forefront to express popular concerns. It was argued that the 1910 Revolution had not reached Chiapas; its progress had been thwarted by land-owners in collusion with local government.¹¹³ Crowds gathered in the Zócalo, Mexico City, calling for the resignation of the Secretary for Internal Affairs, former governor of Chiapas, González Garrido.¹¹⁴



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Yielding to popular pressure, on 12 January Salinas announced a cease-fire and pledged that the rebels would be pardoned. González Garrido was replaced by the widely respected Jorge Carpizo; Manuel Camacho resigned as foreign minister to lead a non-government peace commission. The possibility of dialogue stimulated a recovery of the *Bolsa*.¹¹⁵ As Efrén's cartoon indicates, when the armed combat was suspended, the conflict assumed a literary nature.¹¹⁶ The EZLN evidently believed in the power of the written word and used the media to promote its cause. Marcos challenged the nation to address issues such as racism, poverty, and abuse of power, and directed and extended the ensuing debate. The focus on the rebellion was intensified as the provocative, witty and emotive communiqués that were sent to selected newspapers captured the Mexican imagination.¹¹⁷ The Zapatistas claimed to have been ignored for centuries and wanted to remain in the public spotlight.

The Zapatistas' reaction to the government amnesty was one of incredulity: ¿De qué nos van a perdonar? ¿De no morimos de hambre? [...] ¿De no haber aceptado humildemente la gigantesca carga histórica de desprecio y abandono? ¿De habernos levantado en armas cuando encontramos todos los otros caminos cerrados? [...] ¿De haber demostrado al resto del país y al mundo entero que la dignidad humana vive aún y está en sus habitantes más empobrecidos? [...] ¿De ser mexicanos todos? [...] ¿De luchar por libertad, democracia y justicia?¹¹⁸

Marcos stressed that the Zapatistas were merely demanding their constitutional rights. He asked who had the right to grant forgiveness: “¿Los que nos negaron el derecho y don de nuestras gentes de gobernar y gobernamos? [...] ¿Los que nos torturaron, apresaron, asesinaron y desaparecieron por el grave ‘delito’ de querer un pedazo de tierra?”¹¹⁹ In a series of rhetorical questions, Marcos emphatically stated the Zapatistas'

grievances, and articulated the oppression that was a fact of life in Mexico's poorest State. In so doing, Marcos forced Mexicans to acknowledge the chiapanecos' plight. "¿De qué nos van a perdonar?" stirred the nation. Enrique Krauze, for example, recommended that the Indians be absolved from any crimes and proposed immediate and profound changes to address the inequalities of Chiapas life.¹²⁰

In response and in the interests of "la preservación de la concordia y la paz interna", Demetrio Sodi de la Tijera issued "Veinte Compromisos por la Democracia". The document, a pledge to enact political reform, to ensure clean elections and to strengthen civil society, attracted over 2,000 signatures. Among them were Monsiváis, Poniatowska, Fuentes, Krauze, Flores Olea, and Gastón García Cantú.¹²¹ Former intellectual adversaries were temporarily united in the interests of peace. Sodi would later gain the cooperation of all political parties and presidential candidates to agree that, "sólo a través de la democracia podrán resolverse los grandes problemas nacionales".¹²²

The Zapatistas' willingness to lower their rifles increased support for the rebellion.¹²³ The figure of the masked spokesman rapidly became a national obsession. With his face obscure, and his origins unknown, Marcos was a blank page onto which any image could be printed. He became the eloquent representative of all those without a voice: "Marcos es gay en San Francisco, negro en Sudáfrica, asiático en Europa. [...] Marcos es todas las minorías intoleradas, oprimadas."¹²⁴ 'Marcos' paraphernalia was sold on the streets of major Mexican cities.¹²⁵ Like Superbarrio, the Zapatista spokesman quickly became another anonymous champion of the dispossessed.

The focus upon Marcos inevitably drew attention away from the indigenous nature of the EZLN. Fernando Orgambides pointed out that no-one was interested in the other leaders, "quién interesa es Marcos: su voz, sus ojos, su palabra culta, sus gestos, [...] su capacidad de negociación, su humor y hasta su instinto".¹²⁶ Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas noted Marcos's intellectual power: "Es como un Octavio Paz joven, porque escribe y habla poéticamente."¹²⁷ Régis Debry described Marcos as "el mejor escritor latinoamericano de nuestros días".¹²⁸ Monsiváis, too, emphasised Marcos's intellectual qualifications.¹²⁹ Poniatowska echoed the widespread admiration for the Zapatista spokesman: "Todo el mundo habla de la poesía de sus comunicados, que es [...] un verdadero escritor, un hombre muy sensible."¹³⁰ Yet, as James Scott stressed, although movements may be led by intellectuals, this does not diminish the role of the peasantry in making revolution. He underlined the difficulties of autonomous organisation: "The peasantry is very much in need of the cooperation and tactical vision that only nonpeasant allies can provide." The order and discipline of outside leadership, he continued, could turn a protest into a "nonviolent contest for power within existing structures".¹³¹ Quoting Gramsci, R. Radhakrishnan explained, "a human mass does not 'distinguish' itself and does not become independent 'by itself' without organization by intellectuals". He added that Foucault revealed how the masses needed intellectual leaders. Such people, Radhakrishnan maintained, "were not coercive leaders, nor did they usurp the sovereignty of the people they spoke (and speak) for. Between the leaders and the people there can be a sense of active political community that makes the act of representation genuine and historically real."¹³² Although neither a native of Chiapas, nor an Indian, Marcos lived among the indigenous people of Chiapas for ten years and fully understood their concerns and fears before becoming their organic

intellectual: "He speaks like [the Maya] and thinks in the same way about life and death."¹³³

As a measure of good-will in advance of the peace negotiations, the Zapatistas released Absalón Castellanos. On 25 January agrarian and indigenous community members met with Salinas in Tuxtla Gutiérrez. Manuel Camacho and Bishop Samuel Ruiz were chosen as mediators in the dialogue between the Mexican government and the EZLN. The Zapatistas asked Julio Scherer, editor of *Proceso*, to arbitrate. Scherer was flattered but refused, stating that as a journalist he must retain a neutral status.¹³⁴ Writers and artists proposed Poniatowska and Antonio García León;¹³⁵ and the 1982 and 1988 presidential candidate of the Partido Revolucionario de los Trabajadores (PRT), Rosario Ibarra de Piedra, offered to contribute.¹³⁶ Paz volunteered his services to Camacho; reportedly offering to do everything possible to resolve the conflict. Admitting that intellectuals could not create concrete solutions, Paz sustained, "podemos introducir un poco de serenidad en nuestras reacciones". He continued, "estoy a favor del diálogo y contra el uso de la fuerza, y también digo que todos debemos ayudar".¹³⁷ Lengthy consultations between government representatives and indigenous leaders were held in the cathedral of San Cristóbal; during which thirty-four EZLN demands (among them free and democratic elections; the repeal of Article 27; economic and cultural autonomy for indigenous communities; an end to racial discrimination; new education and housing projects) were given official responses. The Zapatistas then relayed the results to Indian and campesino groups throughout the Chiapas highlands.

Political instability worsened on 23 March when the PRI presidential candidate, Luis Donaldo Colosio Murrieta, was assassinated. The country was stunned. Colosio had been a close associate of Salinas and had directed the Solidaridad programme. It had been widely predicted that Salinas's policies, that had proved so popular with the Mexican public, would have continued under Colosio. The former Secretary of Education, Ernesto Zedillo, who had managed Colosio's campaign, was chosen as his successor. Fears that Mexico would become ungovernable grew as several wealthy businessmen were kidnapped and, in September 1994, PRI Secretary General, José Ruiz Massieu, was murdered. With the crimes unsolved, rumours abounded: many believed the deaths were connected, and that right-wing elements within the PRI were involved.¹³⁸

On 11 June 1994, the Zapatistas announced that the Chiapas communities had overwhelmingly rejected the government's peace proposals; Camacho resigned as mediator accusing Zedillo of undermining his efforts.¹³⁹ With the situation in Chiapas entering a new phase, the Zapatistas issued the "Segunda Declaración de la Selva Lacandona"; inviting civil society to conduct a national dialogue for democracy, freedom and justice, to end to the single-party system. It was stressed that the problems in Chiapas were common throughout the country: the only remedy was a new national political framework. The Zapatistas proposed that a Convención Nacional Democrática (CND) be staged in the Lacandón Jungle to establish a transitional government. The EZLN pledged to continue the cease-fire and to recognise the Convention "como representante auténtico de los intereses del pueblo de México en su tránsito a la democracia".¹⁴⁰

Meanwhile, writers, artists, and politicians were staging their own forum. The Grupo San Angel was formed by some of those who subscribed to Sodi's *Veinte Compromisos*. Camp described the group as "a loosely organised [intellectual] elite."¹⁴¹ Meetings were held to discuss Mexico's democratic transition: it was believed that widespread rebellions would erupt if the forthcoming presidential election was fraudulent.¹⁴² The Grupo San Angel professed no political affiliations and invited other sectors of society to its meetings, including members of the Church and the media. Sodi explained, "el Grupo San Angel es un grupo abierto, interesado en establecer contacto, coordinarse y apoyar a otros grupos". Its aim was to preserve peace and stability, whoever won the election.¹⁴³ The atmosphere was described as that of a "reunión de cuates".¹⁴⁴ Joel Ortega nonetheless stressed the group's "diversidad de orígenes, trayectorias y aspiraciones políticas, sociales e ideológicas".¹⁴⁵ Even Fuentes and Krauze apparently found common ground in their membership; among the other participants were Monsiváis, Poniatowska, Lorenzo Meyer and Jorge Castañeda.

From its inception, the Grupo San Angel was beset by controversy. Rumours persisted that Salinas was party to the group's foundation; accusations that were strenuously denied. Fuentes affirmed that if Salinas had proposed the group's creation, it would never have been established.¹⁴⁶ Sodi, however, welcomed Salinas's interest in the group: "Yo siempre lo he dicho: el Presidente se confundió. Cometió el error al creer que la reforma política no era necesaria." He added that the Zapatistas had made Salinas see the error of his ways; he had consequently taken the political initiative: "Qué malo que fue tarde; qué bueno que es hoy." Javier Livas's assessment was perhaps more realistic: "En política todo el mundo usa a todos los demás. El grupo está

usando a Salinas para mejorar la calidad de la elección. Salinas está usando al grupo para mejorar su imagen."¹⁴⁷

The group's name was that of the exclusive barrio in Mexico City, in or near which most of its members lived. Critics scorned the refined meetings held in aristocratic houses. Reports in *Proceso* focused as much on the Epicurean meals served as the nature of the talks themselves.¹⁴⁸ The select nature of the group led to charges of it being a product of middle-class fear and self-interest.¹⁴⁹ This was substantiated when representatives of the Movimiento Urbano Popular were refused membership. In response, the Grupo Santa Julia was formed; Superbarrio was a founder member. Underlining the distance between the two groups, Superbarrio called for "México para todos", signing the proposal, "Superbarrio Gómez y El Grupo **Sin** Angel".¹⁵⁰

Both Monsiváis and Poniadowska subsequently distanced themselves from the group. Poniadowska explained:

The Grupo San Angel was a political group that was trying to find solutions. In reality, I don't believe that it helped. It began to become a very elitist group. I went twice and then left, I didn't see much future in it. Moreover, it was composed of many people who had only just taken a government position.¹⁵¹

Monsiváis added,

Many people believed they could change the rules of the game for the government and democracy, and part of that illusion was the Grupo San Angel. Really it had no consequences at all. It was a promotion, a publicity stunt, an amusement. Unfortunately it failed. We believed we should make an effort to help to build the transition, but it was impossible at that time.¹⁵²

Practicalities aside, intellectuals clearly felt they could contribute to the democratic transition. Whether or not it was genuine, there was a compulsion to help. Poniatowska claimed that she left the group after becoming aware of its close links to the government, Monsiváis felt that its task was too great; but both had been willing to play their part. The need for peace had, albeit briefly, overcome the rigidity of the intellectual world in which, Paz emphasised, "you cannot exchange ideas in another group's journal".¹⁵³

The Chiapas rebellion caused Mexicans to reappraise their political standing. Some saw it as a chance for a new beginning; others were left in confusion. The major focus was the resort to arms; old classifications of "Left" and "Right" ceased to apply. Left-wing academic Marco Antonio Velázquez Alba was against the Zapatistas' use of violence; this, he claimed, was sufficient for some of his political allies to call him a "government lackey".¹⁵⁴ Were the Zapatistas villains or saints: assets or liabilities to the democratic process? The reactions of Paz, Fuentes, Poniatowska and Monsiváis highlight the intense passions that accompanied this critical period in Mexican political life.

Octavio Paz: The last rebellion of the 20th century

Yo tengo un gran simpatía por los rebeldes y también una gran simpatía por las revueltas populares. Pero a las revoluciones les tengo una gran desconfianza porque la historia de las revoluciones desde el modelo de la francesa han terminado siempre en despotismos. Octavio Paz, April 1985.¹⁵⁵

For intellectuals, politics has replaced ideology and to some extent religion. These are religious wars and also personal wars. Octavio Paz, June 1994.¹⁵⁶

Paz's response to the Chiapas rebellion reflected his belief in Salinas's merits and illustrated the fear of the uneven social development in Mexico that he had predicted in *Posdata*: "O el México desarrollado absorbe e integra al otro o el México subdesarrollado [...] terminará por estrangular al México desarrollado."¹⁵⁷ In October 1993, however, Paz had confirmed the triumph of modernity: "vivimos el final de un largo y penoso proceso de modernización". He was in no doubt to whom credit should be given for its completion: "Han sido decisivas las reformas económicas y políticas realizadas por Carlos Salinas y su equipo. [...] Se dieron cuenta de los cambios de la sociedad mexicana y obraron en consecuencia. Así han sacado al país del pantano en que había caído."¹⁵⁸ Suddenly, overnight, the Zapatistas distorted this image. The "underdeveloped Mexico" threatened to smother modernity and progress. Writing while details of the uprising were sparse, Paz depicted the surprise and alarm. He advocated calm, stressing that Chiapas was different from the rest of the country; its historical and social conditions had more in common with Central America than Mexico. It was a local skirmish in a remote State; national security was not at risk. Moreover, Paz added, the indigenous communities of Chiapas were infiltrated with extremists who had converted them into "bases revolucionarios y militares". The ideological origins of such fanatics, he continued, were, "restos del gran naufragio de las ideologías revolucionarias del siglo XX".¹⁵⁹ In his desire for stability and to emphasise the success of neoliberalism, Paz defined the unrest as part of a process that had already

been defeated with the fall of Communism. He underlined that the Zapatista movement was a remnant, an ending rather than the beginning of widespread disorder.

Turning to the Indians' position in society, Paz acknowledged their suffering but claimed recent Federal initiatives had redressed the balance. The situation must have improved considerably since 1974 when he had noted that lack of agrarian reform; inadequate roads, hospitals, schools and housing; and underemployment made campesinos spontaneously resort to violence.¹⁶⁰ Rather, Paz stressed the benefits of Solidaridad schemes: Marcos would later demonstrate that Solidaridad had provided two prisons and a hospital without equipment.¹⁶¹ As Neil Harvey pointed out, funding was given to associations tied to the PRI, effectively increasing the local caciques' power.¹⁶² Following the government line, Paz drew attention to "la intervención de grupos extremistas". Less resolutely he added, "no es imposible [...] la presencia entre ellos de guerrilleros centroamericanos". He explained that outside involvement in Chiapas was evident from the tactics used: "No debe olvidarse que las comunidades indígenas han sido engañadas por un grupo de irresponsables demagogos." Paz thus implied that the Indians were incapable of independent action; pawns with no ambitions of their own. Moreover, their cause was already lost: the indigenous army had no possibility of a military victory.¹⁶³ These views are identical to those expressed in 1968 that portrayed the students as victims of a conspiracy theory. Indeed, in 1971, Paz had commented, "[la] obsesión que consiste en ver la mano del extranjero en el menor gesto de crítica, [es] una obsesión que nosotros los mexicanos conocemos muy bien".¹⁶⁴ Then Paz had been vehemently opposed to such notions; in 1994 he was among the first to promote them.

Paz endorsed the government's analysis of the situation; Salinas then seemed to act speedily upon Paz's observations. His 6 January Message to the Nation was heavily influenced by Paz: Salinas repeated Paz's praise of his investment in Chiapas and echoed his sentiments about the non-indigenous nature of the rebellion. Peaceful Indian communities were being threatened by the violent action of an extremist group; Salinas maintained its leaders were, "armado en contra de la tranquilidad de las comunidades, la paz pública y las instituciones del gobierno". This, he emphasised, was unacceptable: "No se puede tolerar el atentado contra la vida de un indígena, de un habitante de esas ciudades, de un policía, de un soldado del Ejército nacional, de ningún ser humano. [...] Este grupo armado está en contra de México."¹⁶⁵ Salinas re-stated Paz's view that irresponsible demagogues had endangered the indigenous communities, but took it a stage further: such people were attacking Mexican interests and as enemies of the nation these fanatics must be defeated. He thus vindicated any government reprisals by placing the blame for the violence firmly on the shoulders of the so-called foreign agitators.

Salinas's reaction to Paz's comments demonstrates the liability of making a premature, ill-researched response to a national event. Paz had the right to express his views but, as Noam Chomsky stressed, intellectuals have the "moral responsibility to consider the consequences of what [they] write".¹⁶⁶ Paz himself acknowledged, "nuestra información es todavía muy incompleta",¹⁶⁷ but accepted the government's insistence of a foreign intervention in the region. Salinas then took aspects of Paz's essay that reinforced his own position and used them to legitimise his objective: swiftly to crush the rebels. In the interests of minimising the unrest, Paz and Salinas adopted and extended each other's thesis, further distorting arbitrary findings based on superficial appearances. It hardly seems credible that the words of Paz, who in 1968 had resigned

in protest against government repression, could be used as a pretext for Federal troops to attack Mexican communities in Chiapas. In 1968 Paz had been opposed to Army involvement and suggested that peaceful means should be tried;¹⁶⁸ in 1994 he stated: "creo que el Ejército podrá restablecer pronto el orden en esa región. Debe hacerlo con humanidad y respetando los derechos humanos."¹⁶⁹ Could a heavily armed military unit be certain of respecting human rights in a remote and inhospitable terrain; in which the "enemy" had not been identified? Monsiváis was more critical of the government strategy: "The Army used rockets, not bombs... Rockets, bombs - what's the difference?"¹⁷⁰

Salinas may have been impressed with "El nudo de Chiapas", but elsewhere the article provoked a storm of criticism. Paz dismissed all dissent claiming that he had been misunderstood, and reiterated his desires for dialogue and a peaceful conclusion to the conflict. He did not clarify if Salinas was among those who misconstrued his words.¹⁷¹ Paz was, perhaps, already planning a more sustained attack on his opponents. Forgetting that only three months earlier he had proclaimed freedom of the press to be essential to democracy,¹⁷² Paz denounced those who supported the Zapatistas, "que llevan la voz cantante - estrellas y coro - en la prensa". He affirmed, their "ruidosas manifestaciones carecen de variedad": Mexico was witnessing "una recaída en ideas y actitudes que creímos enterradas bajo los escombros [...] del muro de Berlín". Surely Paz reasoned, continuing his argument of the 1990 *Vuelta* conference, they realised that Communism had failed as an alternative; instead those on the Left blindly seized upon the Chiapas rebellion to prove the validity of their political views. Such people, he maintained, did not accept the world as it was, but as they would like it to be. Paz stressed they thus failed in their intellectual duty: "La función del intelectual consiste

en esclarecerlos [hechos sociales] y descifrarlos, hasta donde sea posible. Sólo después de análisis se puede, y aún se debe tomar partido. Pero mucho de los intelectuales han escogido lo más fácil: juzgar sin oír."¹⁷³ Yet had not Paz, while admitting that he did not know all the facts, declared the Zapatistas to be neither Mexican nor indigenous led? As he had revealed in 1990, for Paz "freedom of speech" apparently meant the liberty to agree with him.

Paz, however, argued that he was not blinded by his own ideology: "No cierro los ojos ante la miseria y el desamparo de las comunidades indígenas." He admitted that Marcos's "¿De qué nos van a perdonar?" moved him, adding that all Mexicans should seek the Indians' forgiveness. In his concern for the Indians' position, however, Paz focused exclusively upon his studies, rather than examine what was happening in Chiapas. Again drawing upon *Posdata*,¹⁷⁴ he cited the population explosion in Chiapas as having exacerbated social and economic tensions. Paz claimed that many analysts overlooked demographic pressure as a cause of social unrest, and could not resist a sneer: "¿Por qué? Muchos por obcecación ideológica y por espíritu del partido, [...] otros por cálculo: siempre reditúa afiliarse a una 'buena causa' y usarla como un trampolín publicitario."¹⁷⁵

Repeating sentiments he had expressed after the 1992 Coloquio, Paz accused those opposed to the Army's intervention in Chiapas of enacting their "fantasmas juveniles". He explained that they once supported "las atrocidades" of Castro, and the Sandinistas.¹⁷⁶ Paz continued that in their rush to support the underdog, these writers were oblivious to the total defeat of guerrilla warfare in Latin America, and that countries had been ruined and dictatorships strengthened in the process. Neglecting to

mention that the Federal intervention in Chiapas dramatically increased the bloodshed, Paz maintained that although some violations may have occurred, the presence of the Army reduced the casualties on both sides.¹⁷⁷ Salinas's Chiapas policy, he added, was designed to "pacificar con la razón". At the outbreak of the conflict Paz had stated that intellectuals should introduce "un poco de serenidad en nuestras reacciones".¹⁷⁸ Paz perhaps believed he had helped to supply such sense; for evidence he cited the government cease-fire, the replacement of González Garrido, the amnesty for the rebels, and the nomination of Camacho as negotiator. Such conduct, Paz claimed, proved Salinas's integrity; furthermore, Salinas had the full support of the Mexican people: "La opinión pública ha aplaudido estas medidas."¹⁷⁹ Paz's vision was evidently clouded by his belief in Salinas: had not the president's reaction been a counter-attack? Rather than government instigated, did not the huge demonstrations and numerous letters and articles bring about the cease-fire? Paz dismissed the possibility of Mexican independent action, contending that Salinas took the initiative with the passive approval of civil society.

Paz anticipated the forthcoming presidential election, fearing the Chiapas rebellion would disrupt the democratic process. He praised Salinas's efforts: "a pesar de todos sus defectos, a veces cojeando y otras a trompicones, a gritos y porrazos, la democracia mexicana comienza a cobrar realidad".¹⁸⁰ Again Paz ignored the accusations of fraud that had accompanied Salinas to power.¹⁸¹ Far from emphasising the failure to achieve democratic change in 1988, Paz maintained the Zapatistas threatened it in its infancy. Paz's concern was that if the unrest continued Mexico would become ungovernable, provoking further violence and possibly resulting in a dictatorship.¹⁸² While Paz's concerns were undoubtedly sincere (he had expressed such

anxieties in *Posdata* and often repeated them¹⁸³) his view reveals the different experiences of the Mexican races. The Indians of Chiapas would argue that they resorted to violence after the legal system had repeatedly failed them. Where Paz viewed democratic progress, the chiapanecos saw a succession of repressive governors kept in power by electoral fraud. They might claim that ungovernability was more attractive than illegitimate, autocratic government. Rather than acknowledge this crucial disparity, Paz called for peace. He neither addressed the racism of Chiapas society nor the determination of the elite to keep its privileged position. It would take more than legislation to change life in Chiapas.

Former student leader, PRD member Pablo Gómez angrily responded by pointing out that Paz had no concept of what was happening in Chiapas: the Zapatistas sought democracy and liberty not power. Paz may support Salinas's neoliberal reforms but, Gómez added sharply, those who had studied the economic situation in Chiapas could see that it had considerably worsened. Rather than jeopardise Mexico's democratic transition as Paz maintained, Gómez underlined that the Zapatistas were calling for the right to choose their government: there was no democracy in Chiapas. Gómez advised Paz to view life as it was, rather than how he would like it to be:

En realidad, [Paz es...] un ideólogo que pretende elaborar o reelaborar sistemáticamente ideas con la pretensión de marcar un rumbo para todos. [...] La manera de lanzarse contra "nuestros intelectuales", sin entrar en polémica con ninguno de ellos, hace de su crítica algo inservible. [...] Paz sigue apartado del estudio sistemático de la realidad, envuelto en un mundo de *ideas convenientes, generadoras de progreso*, [...] pero de espaldas al movimiento real de la sociedad que debe ser analizado sin concesiones, si se quiere contribuir a la transformación social¹⁸⁴

Paz's privileged world, Gómez stressed, was far removed from the impoverished existence of millions of Mexicans. Yet rather than accept the counsel of those with experience, Paz condemned their views out of hand. Gómez thus turned Paz's charge of "juzgar sin oír" against the poet.

By early February, however, Paz had moderated his stance. Far from emphasising the role of foreign extremist groups in the region, he described, "las distintas comunidades indígenas que forman el movimiento en Chiapas". Moreover, he added, "como mexicanos que son, tienen derecho a participar en el debate".¹⁸⁵ In searching to bridge the chasm between his society and that of Chiapas, Paz examined the process of *mestizaje*. He noted that it was successful: although Spanish language, beliefs and institutions prevailed, "el elemento indígena está en todos los dominios de la cultura y la vida mexicana, de la religión a la poesía, de la familia a la pintura, de la comida a la cerámica".¹⁸⁶ Here Paz, perhaps unconsciously, identified the essence of Mexican racism. What he depicted as harmony was a dominant "white" race that would only accept certain aspects of indigenous culture and cuisine: on a personal level, the Indian remained at the bottom of society.¹⁸⁷

Paz called for compassion, endorsing Demetrio Sodi's "Veinte Compromisos" as the way forward: "La responsabilidad del gobierno y de los partidos es cumplir el pacto; la nuestra, la de ciudadanos: obligar al gobierno y a los partidos a cumplirlo."¹⁸⁸ Again, he portrayed civil society as passive; ensuring that the government fulfilled its pledges, rather than insisting upon a different course. Paz's definition of compromise was soon apparent: he dismissed the Zapatistas' demand to reverse the changes to Article 27 on the basis, "hundiría definitivamente a la agricultura mexicana sin [...]"

liberar a los campesinos". Paz was equally unyielding to their call for autonomy, affirming it would lead to the disintegration of the Republic. He said he wanted to conserve unity and tradition,¹⁸⁹ but in so doing, Paz ignored the custom of racism that the Zapatistas emphasised had been prevalent since conquest. The Mexico that Paz wanted to preserve was based upon inequality. Paz himself had referred to two Mexicos,¹⁹⁰ in February 1994 he asked, "¿soy demasiado crédulo si digo que el alba de la democracia mexicano despunta en el horizonte?".¹⁹¹ The answer would surely depend upon which Mexico Paz was facing: the developed or the undeveloped.

Paz's plea for understanding did not include the views of his peers. In March, he resumed his attack observing, "ha hecho correr poca sangre y mucha tinta. [...] En cuanto a los mares de tinta que ennegrecen los diarios: al principio producían un cosquilleo intelectual: hoy provocan un invencible bostezo."¹⁹² The Zapatistas may have been marginalised and forgotten, but Paz believed their case had been overstated. The extensive coverage made the issue fatuous; having made his contribution, Paz would like to close the debate and change the subject. He withdrew his pen from the arena, but his remarks continued to resound. Recalling Paz's attitude in 1988, Heberto Castillo remarked, "Paz ha olvidado, o lo disimula bien, que uno de los factores fundamentales del estallido en Chiapas ha sido la acción corrupta del gobierno de Carlos Salinas, para lo cual no ha tenido sino encendidas elogias y muy apagadas críticas."¹⁹³ Fernando Benítez added a barbed caution: "espero que la vejez no lo afecte y que se despoje de rencores inútiles, y vuelva a ser el hombre generoso y solidario que fue en su juventud".¹⁹⁴ With passions high and the debate in the public sphere, Paz was unable to have the last word.

Carlos Fuentes: The first post-communist revolution

Chiapas demostró que el goteo económico del neoliberalismo no llegaría ni a Chiapas ni a muchos partes del país. Carlos Fuentes, January 1994.¹⁹⁵

If Fuentes had been silent following the earthquake and reticent to comment on the 1988 election result, he immediately responded to the crisis in Chiapas. Typically diplomatic, Fuentes was vehement only in his opposition to violence. Just three days after the uprising, he acknowledged the validity of the Zapatista demands. Rather than isolate one cause for the present unrest, he stated that the chiapanecos were victims of successive bad local governments. He accepted the analysis that the 1910 Revolution had not reached the State,¹⁹⁶ and endorsed the proposal that intellectuals should create an atmosphere in which a "revolución pacífica" could be achieved in Chiapas. Like Paz, Fuentes sustained that intellectuals had an important part to play in resolving the conflict;¹⁹⁷ yet Fuentes implied he would overlook the Zapatistas' use of force if agreements were reached. Sympathising with the campesinos, Fuentes rejected the propaganda that the Indians were being manipulated, and claimed that the rebellion was inevitable. He stated that poverty was the key to the problem: the Chiapas elite had received the benefits of Federal reform rather than the needy.¹⁹⁸ Rather than condemn Salinas's government, however, Fuentes targeted the less tangible "elite" for reproof. He would later liken its coercive arm, the *guardias blancas*, to death squads.¹⁹⁹

Indeed, Fuentes paid tribute to recent Federal initiatives in Chiapas. He cited the \$50 million investment in *Solidaridad* schemes, but questioned if economic reform alone could combat need: "Sin reforma política, la reforma económica es frágil y, aun engañosa. Si en Chiapas los recursos de *Solidaridad* hubiesen corrido parejos a una renovación política, la violencia actual se hubiese, quizás, evitado."²⁰⁰ Fuentes

maintained that Solidaridad had been improperly implemented: local government thwarted its worthy objectives. The Zapatistas proved the limitations of economic reform; Mexico's distribution of wealth needed to be revised. Fuentes called for urgent change, but nonetheless praised the PRI's long rule. Mexico had become "una nación moderna, con sentido de su identidad y de su unidad factible"; the next step should be a reformation of the political system within "un sólido contexto democrático". For Fuentes, "sólo esto impedirá que se repita el drama de Chiapas".²⁰¹

Fuentes was writing amid growing concerns of increased violence in the region. He warned of the consequences of extending the conflict: "La situación política será tanto más difícil, sin embargo, si el Ejército se extiende su celo, confundiendo a Chiapas con Vietnam y defoliando la selva chiapaneca con bombas de alta potencia." Engaging in guerrilla warfare would commit the Army to a campaign that could last many years, cost thousands of lives and cause irreparable ecological damage. Fuentes also recalled another more sensitive precedent:

El Ejército [...] tiene una imagen dañada por los sucesos de octubre de 1968: la matanza de cientos de estudiantes inocentes en Tlatelolco a fin de tener una olimpiada feliz y preservar la "buena imagen internacional" de México. El Ejército no debe dañarse aún más con el uso excesivo de la fuerza en Chiapas.²⁰²

This was a strong warning to Salinas: although he did not mention Díaz Ordaz's name, all Mexicans were fully aware that the brutality at Tlatelolco had discredited him. The Mexican government may have evaded overt condemnation in 1968, but Fuentes stressed this would not be the case in 1994. Footage of the Federal response was already appearing in the national and foreign press; Salinas's reputation would be severely damaged if this were to continue.

Fuentes's main target was local government. He singled out the governor of Chiapas as incompetent and pointed out that his "patrón", González Garrido, was "el jefe virtual del gabinete mexicano". Fuentes recommended, "ambos deben cederle el paso a un gobernador realmente representativo del pueblo chiapaneco, un gobernador que inspire confianza y unión".²⁰³ If Fuentes was offering Salinas a scapegoat, Salinas was swift to respond. Four days later González Garrido left office. Yet Fuentes's evocative "Chiapas, donde hasta las piedras gritan" did not succeed in dissuading Salinas from increasing military activity in the region. Undaunted, Fuentes urged the government to stop the Federal offensives. He co-signed a letter protesting against Army attacks on civilians, and called for non-government organisations (NGOs) to broker a peaceful solution to the conflict.²⁰⁴ Apparently eager to be seen to heed public concern, Salinas subsequently promised a full investigation into the Army's conduct.²⁰⁵

Examining the nature and the extent of racism in Mexico that the Zapatistas exposed, Fuentes confirmed, "hay un grado de discriminación racial muy alto en nuestro país, más alto de lo que sospechábamos".²⁰⁶ He continued, "sólo respetamos a los indios en los museos".²⁰⁷ Fuentes thus disputed Paz's view that the indigenous presence in Chiapas, "no es una reliquia sino una realidad".²⁰⁸ Furthermore, Fuentes emphasised the Zapatistas' Mexican pedigree, and that they were demanding their constitutional rights: "Chiapas nos ha obligado a darnos cuenta de todo lo que hemos olvidado y a oír todas las voces que no estábamos acostumbrados a escuchar." The rebellion shook many Mexicans from the complacent belief that the Republic was achieving first-world status.²⁰⁹ Fuentes examined the agrarian and indigenous community demands put before Salinas at Tuxtla Gutiérrez and found them to be justified. He concluded, "demuestran que ellos son verdaderamente la 'gente de razón', y no son los supuestos

monopolizadores de la razón, los ladinos, blancos y mestizos".²¹⁰ By recording the Indians as "gente de razón", Fuentes attacked the practice of humbling and exploiting the native races that has prevailed in Mexico since conquest.

Furthermore, Fuentes defined the uprising "la primera revolución poscomunista".²¹¹ Fuentes had already acknowledged that the political gains of the 1910 Revolution had not reached Chiapas; hence his use of "revolution" can be seen to justify the Zapatista movement. Were not the revolutionary benefits achieved by violent means? For Fuentes, 'Chiapas' represented the unresolved grievances that became apparent following the end of communism: the fall of the Berlin Wall had not heralded the disappearance of all evils; injustices remained and were increasing. This view directly challenged Paz's analysis that the Zapatistas' ideology belonged to a bygone era.²¹² Although Fuentes did not condone the use of force, he seemed to understand it: the chiapanecos were left without hope and in their desperation had turned to violence.

Fuentes believed that 'Chiapas' left the Mexican government with two possible courses of action: "o hay en el corto plazo una profunda reforma política que le dé credibilidad a las próximas elecciones presidenciales, o habrá más Chiapas en todo el país". To achieve the former, Fuentes appealed to Salinas to ensure a lawful election result. Fuentes, who had remained silent during the accusations of fraud in 1988, stressed that Mexico could not afford another dubious election result. Like Paz, Fuentes maintained that Mexico was only a short step away from widespread unrest: "Bastaría un llamamiento de [Marcos] para que hubiera alzamientos en otras partes de la República."²¹³ Fuentes differed from Paz in that he felt government restraint, not force, would prevent such disorder. He explained that the country could never function as one

unit while situations of extreme poverty remained. He feared a division, “entre un norte, más o menos próspero, [...] y un sur irreversiblemente rezagado”. Fuentes endorsed Demetrio Sodi’s *Veinte Compromisos* as a means of preventing the spread of violence; he emphasised the need to identify the causes of social disorder in Chiapas and to apply democratic measures throughout the country.²¹⁴ He called for a reformation of the political system: checks and balances on the national government; a complete separation of powers; and the development of local enterprises that included all citizens. Echoing Che Guevara, Fuentes warned, “si no se resuelven los problemas de la democracia en Chiapas, no se resolverán en México, y si no se resuelven en México, pronto habrá una, dos, tres Chiapas en Hidalgo, Oaxaca, Michoacán, Guerrero...” Yet Fuentes pointed out the novelty of the situation: “La revolución chiapaneca, entre sus virtudes, tiene la de poseer un vocabulario fresco, directo, poscomunista. El subcomandante Marcos, me parece, ha leído más a Carlos Monsiváis que a Carlos Marx.”²¹⁵ Fuentes underlined the Mexican nature of the Zapatista rebellion, and the vitality of Marcos’s and Monsiváis’s diction. Fuentes had already stated that this was not a resurrection of socialism: the Chiapas insurrection heralded the next era. When describing it, therefore, one should use fresh language and not antiquated, stale terminology. Fuentes interpreted the unrest within the bounds of its unique context.

Paz rejected Fuentes’s designation of ‘Chiapas’ as the first post-communist revolution. While Paz promoted it as a relic from the past, Fuentes saw a new beginning; Fuentes perceived change, whereas Paz saw the need for stability. Paz also strove to contain the Zapatistas’ growing popularity. Without mentioning his name, Paz called Fuentes “un desaprensivo”, adding, “ahora media docena de pericos repiten imperturbables ese despapucho”. That so many appeared to agree with Fuentes was an

additional source of annoyance to Paz. He emphasised that the uprising was not a revolution: “ni por sus proporciones [...] ni por su doctrina o ideología. Los insurrectos no se proponen ya no digamos cambiar al mundo. [...] Su programa no preconiza un cambio de sistema social y económico.”²¹⁶ Paz underlined the differences between the Zapatistas and their revolutionary predecessors. Yet was it not precisely Fuentes’s point that the EZLN did not conform to existing models? By seeking to ridicule Fuentes, Paz succeeded in endorsing his view.

Fuentes stressed the importance of expanding the battle of words rather than resurrecting armed warfare. This possibility was greatly assisted by the vast coverage in the Mexican press. Unlike Paz, he paid tribute to those who joined the debates: “Tienen mucho, muchísimo, que aportar a través de sus ideas, y la muestra se está dando respeto a Chiapas. [...] Es tan apabullante el hecho de que los intelectuales mexicanos se han manifestado de una manera muy aliada, muy positiva y que todas las opiniones son respetables.” Whereas Fuentes valued the intellectuals’ contribution, Paz accused them of “juzgar sin oír.”²¹⁷ Was Fuentes acting in that way by quoting conditions as they existed in Chiapas, and acknowledging the failure of Solidaridad due to a lack of political reform in that State? Or was he responding to the new circumstances that were challenging Mexico? Fuentes refused to enter a personal polemic with Paz: “no soy exterminador ni de guerrilleros ni de intelectuales”.²¹⁸ His priority was for the conflict to be resolved peacefully.

In March, Fuentes voiced his appreciation of government strategy:

El presidente Salinas que en sus primeras horas de la rebelión tuvo la clásica reacción de suprimirla por la fuerza, dio un golpe de timón una semana más tarde y, para su honor, liberó a su gabinete de pesos muertos, nombró a

Camacho comisionado para la paz en Chiapas, decretó un amnistía y dispuesto el escenario para las negociaciones políticas nacionales.²¹⁹

Like Paz, Fuentes praised Salinas for renouncing force in favour of diplomacy, without mentioning the intense public pressure that led to this transformation. The opposition of intellectuals in conjunction with civil society compelled Salinas to adopt a more conciliatory tone. Two months later, Fuentes further flattered Salinas: "Obró con sentido común y visión democrática al renunciar, en Chiapas, a la represión sangrienta y optar, en cambio, por la vía de la negociación."²²⁰ Overlooking the Federal intervention and the attacks on indigenous communities, Fuentes applauded Salinas for creating a situation in which, "el que disparé el primer tiro en Chiapas habrá perdido la guerra". Moreover, Fuentes claimed that this peaceful route gave dignity to the chiapanecos; he did not mention Marcos's eloquent communiques that had reached the Mexican conscience, earning them far more respect than the government could bestow. Instead, Fuentes promoted Salinas as the conveyer of Mexican democracy. Concerned about the forthcoming presidential election, and the probability of further violence, Fuentes wrote that Salinas had a great opportunity, "para pasar a la historia como el presidente de la transición democrática". He called upon civil society to transform the direction of Mexico.²²¹ After reading this article, Salinas is reputed to have telephoned Fuentes in London to discuss the means of achieving this. According to Demetrio Sodi, the Grupo San Angel was consequently founded.²²² Although Fuentes denied that Salinas had anything to do with the group's formation, rumours persisted that the president had responded to Fuentes's work and actively sought his intellectual participation.

There was some evidence that Salinas paid attention to Fuentes. In July, he stated,

en Chiapas se da el primer movimiento guerrillero posterior a la guerra fría, lo que quiere decir que no se puede ubicar en una confrontación Este-Oeste. Antes, la presión para acabar con estos movimientos era inmediata y a cualquier costo. Ahora, sin embargo, todos compartimos valores como derechos humanos que nos obligan a ser muy escrupulosos.²²³

Salinas employed Fuentes's definition, but significantly used "movement", not revolution; thus distancing himself from lending any measure of legitimacy to the uprising. Nor did Salinas mention that his first reaction had been to send the Army to the region. If Fuentes sought to sway the president, Salinas was equally capable of manipulation: he accepted only those of Fuentes's words that presented him as a scrupulous observer of human rights. Salinas might welcome intellectuals' contributions, but adapted them to suit his purposes.

As early as 1 February, Fuentes acknowledged the Zapatistas' impact:

Es indiscutible que los tiros del Ejército Zapatista, hasta los que se dispararon con rifles de madera, se oyeron en todo el país, dieron en el blanco y han conmocionado a México. Nos han ayudado a todos a atender estos problemas y a entender que hay un problema básico en el país.²²⁴

The Chiapas rebellion forced democratic change onto the national agenda. Fuentes postulated a transformation of the entire country, as set out in the "Veinte Compromisos", but would these have been written without the Zapatistas? Intellectuals, whatever their political leaning, concurred that the Chiapas "problem" was "historical", yet few had addressed the plight of the Indians before 1994. As discussed above, Juan Bañuelos was ignored when he raised the issue five years earlier.²²⁵ Only after the Zapatistas resorted to arms did writers rush to defend the Indians. In the early days of the movement, without condoning the violence, Fuentes acknowledged that the use of force had been necessary; yet, although his work consistently endorsed the Zapatistas'

essential role, as 1994 progressed Fuentes expressed less sympathy for them. The test would come when Fuentes was asked to attend the CND.

Elena Poniatowska: “¿Qué lejos está Chiapas!”

Creo que hay que vivir con los indígenas un tiempo para empezar a vincularse y entenderlos. Elena Poniatowska, January 1994.²²⁶

Poniatowska's initial reaction to the Chiapas rebellion was fear for the safety of the campesinos. On 3 January, she described the situation as a “masacre” and “un baño de sangre”. Not ostensibly taking sides, she voiced concern for Mexico's eternal victims, “los olvidados”; seeing the situation as “una advertencia de lo que vamos a vivir en el país si no se imparte justicia social y la riqueza se sigue acumulando entre unos cuantos”. Poniatowska called for a solution that was “social, política y humana”. Like Fuentes she organised protest letters giving a voice to the indigenous communities that were suffering government attacks. Denouncing the use of force on both sides, she demanded a cease-fire; an amnesty for the Zapatistas; for NGOs to assess the situation; and for all-inclusive talks to reach a peaceful solution.²²⁷

Her work contributed to the intense public pressure that brought an end to the violence and enabled dialogue to begin. From the outset Poniatowska expressed her shock, horror and anguish. Undoubtedly recalling Tlatelolco, she described the photographs of the young victims that were appearing in the press. As in the government's attempt swiftly to move forwards after the earthquakes, Poniatowska stated that to return to “la normalidad” after such hostility would be an outrage. This was “una de las matanzas más brutales de nuestra historia”. Poniatowska reminded her

readers that this was not an isolated incident: other brutal massacres had occurred.²²⁸ Her thoughts were with the Indians of Chiapas, "que están a punto de desaparecer". Unlike Paz who sought to stress the difference between Chiapas and the rest of the Republic, Poniatowska regretted the discrepancies that caused such divisions. Yet she did not censure any one party: "La culpa nos invade al percatamos de nuestro olvido."²²⁹ Poniatowska accepted her share of responsibility before the publication of "¿De qué nos van a perdonar?" that would move her peers to voice similar sentiments.

"¿Qué lejos está Chiapas!": as Poniatowska observed, the State is both geographically and socially distant from Mexico City; the experience that led the Zapatistas to rebel was unknown to her. As she had done after the Tlatelolco massacre and the earthquakes,²³⁰ Poniatowska voiced feelings of inadequacy: "Lo que nosotros podemos decir aquí en el Distrito Federal es bien pobre, bien insatisfactorio. [...] Por eso, leo a los que escriben en vivo, en el lugar de los hechos."²³¹ Poniatowska underlined the importance of writers who had direct experience of Chiapas life; reading their work enabled her to understand the conditions that led to the rebellion. She later supplemented these sources by talking to those involved and reflected their views and concerns. She was careful not overtly to pass judgement, allowing those with experience to make their own cases.

Her first subject, Juan Bañuelos, depicted the Indians as trapped in a void between the past and the present: "Vemos así a los heridos de la gran cultura maya vestidos con ropa de segundo distribuida por los misionarios norteamericanos; pescando en los ríos con arco y flechas, comprando aparatos eléctricos que resultarán inútiles en sus alejados caseríos." Bañuelos explained how in the Lacandón Jungle, "authentic"

Indians, dressed in traditional clothes, were strategically positioned at tourist sites to give the impression of a living and flourishing culture. While Paz reported that Indian traditions were apparent in all aspects of Mexican life, Bañuelos illustrated their fragility and superficiality. Bañuelos also offered an alternative to Paz's view that the conflict was a local issue with little national impact; emphasising that the race question was not confined to States with high indigenous populations. There were 489,000 Indians living in Mexico City; economic refugees who, due to the failure of agrarian programmes, sought work in the metropolis. *Capitalinos* could no longer close their eyes to the problems in far-off States such as Chiapas: sooner or later they would arrive on their doorsteps.²³² Furthermore, he warned the conflict would not be short-lived: "Creo que este levamiento llegó para quedarse [...] aunque se imponga la estrategia militar de *tierra arrasada* como en Vietnam." Like Fuentes, Bañuelos recalled Vietnam, he was certain of the form that war in this region would take: he knew the terrain.

Bañuelos paid tribute to Chiapas intellectuals who had highlighted the contradictions and injustices of Chiapas life.²³³ In 1984 he had added his own protest: after being awarded the literary Premio Chiapas, Bañuelos publicly signed his cheque over to Bishop Samuel Ruiz instructing him to give the funds to the families of nineteen indigenous campesinos who had been recently killed by *guardias blancas*.²³⁴ As mentioned above, in 1989 Bañuelos renewed his protests in the national press. Yet acknowledging that local intellectuals had frequently expressed the situation in Chiapas emphasised the futility of their action. Despite their combined efforts, the Zapatista rebellion had taken most Mexicans by surprise. José Emilio Pacheco admitted that only after 1 January 1994 were books denouncing racism and exploitation in Chiapas deemed to be essential reading.²³⁵ Whether or not the government had any prior knowledge of

guerrilla activity in the region,²³⁶ it was widely accepted that the Mexican people “discovered” Chiapas in 1994.²³⁷ A desperate group took control of four towns to reach the national conscience. Without the resort to arms how could the words of the unknown faceless Marcos have succeeded when so many had failed before?

Bañuelos heavily influenced Poniatowska’s subsequent work on Chiapas.

Referring to his observations that Indians were used for tourist propaganda, she stated:

Los indígenas como los habitantes de Chiapas no son ya personajes del *National Geographic*, están sujetos a las mismas influencias que nosotros dentro su miseria. Los indígenas de hoy no son indígenas de papel, indígenas del libro de historia o del Museo [...], sino seres con un idioma, una actitud ante la vida que hay que aprender.²³⁸

Poniatowska built upon Bañuelos’s indignation.²³⁹ To strengthen her argument she interviewed Manuel Fernández, who was collecting provisions in Mexico City to redistribute in Chiapas. Fernández endorsed Bañuelos’s view that the rebellion was not a local phenomenon; unlike Paz who approved the changes to Article 27,²⁴⁰ Fernández stated that Salinas’s reform had detrimental effects for all campesinos.²⁴¹ Using the tactic adopted in 1968 when she spoke to Dr. Guerra,²⁴² Poniatowska added that Dr. Fernández obtained his doctorate at Oxford. He was an educated man who was talking sense.

In common with many writers, Poniatowska examined the past to understand what was happening in Chiapas. Three weeks into the conflict, Poniatowska reprinted an interview with anthropologist Ricardo Pozas.²⁴³ In 1957 Poniatowska had questioned Pozas about his work in the indigenous communities of Puebla, Oaxaca and Chiapas. In editing it, Poniatowska allowed the present to intrude, adding, “trienta y siete años más

tarde, leería con pasión los comunicados del EZLN y me conmovió el arrebatado interrogatorio del subcomandante insurgente *Marcos* [...] en que éste pregunta ‘¿De qué nos van a perdonar?’”.²⁴⁴ Poniatowska stepped into the narrative to stress that the sufferings voiced by Pozas still remained. She concluded that as a man of peace Pozas would have condemned the current unrest; yet as a humanitarian he would have sympathised with the Indians. Here Poniatowska can be seen to articulate her own predicament: she pitied the Zapatistas, but could not excuse their use of force.

In search of a solution to her conflict of conscience, Poniatowska scrutinised the EZLN communiques. She perceived the Zapatistas to be encouraging Mexicans to perform a greater role in national affairs. Civil society should demand the abolition of the conditions that had made a desperate sector of society turn to violence: “El EZLN llama a los mexicanos para que hagan su parte. [...] A nosotros que deseamos hacer algo, participar en el cambio. EL EZLN nos interpela.” Poniatowska approved of the strategy to widen the debate and urged civil society to direct it. To emphasise the public participation, Poniatowska asked, “¿Y quién es la sociedad civil?”. She replied, “ustedes, nosotros” and named a cross section of intellectuals, including Paz and his current verbal adversary, Pablo Gómez.²⁴⁵ While not condoning Gómez’s attack on Paz, by including his name Poniatowska inevitably drew attention to it: Mexicans of all political persuasions should take part. Assessing the contributions already made, Poniatowska noted, “la presión pública ejercida por los mexicanos a partir del 3 de enero para el cese al fuego resultó definitiva y esto alienta a la participación”.²⁴⁶ Although praising the achievement of forcing the cease-fire, Poniatowska was aware that this could mark the beginning of a greater programme.

Poniatowska also assessed what the communiqués did not say. She perceived no talk of suspending elections, nor of interference in the ballot; indeed, “no dice nada a lo cual no podemos responder. Simplemente declara que [...] Chiapas tiene hambre, que ha tendido malos gobiernos y que la situación se volvió tan intolerable que no tuvieron más remedio que recurrir a las armas y por lo tanto a la violencia.”²⁴⁷ Poniatowska declared that she was a passionate reader of Marcos’s work, in particular “¿De qué nos van a perdonar?”.²⁴⁸ She had analysed the EZLN documents, spoken to those who knew the area and its specific problems, and then formed her verdict: the Zapatistas were sincere. Rather than face the dilemma of their resort to arms, Poniatowska paid tribute to the Zapatistas for lowering their weapons and staging negotiations. She concluded:

El EZLN es un movimiento que pretende la transformación de la sociedad para que ella (no el EZLN) tome el poder. Es la sociedad civil la que tiene que responsabilizarse. [...] Todos tenemos una responsabilidad, todos aquellos que creemos que por razones éticas y políticas no se puede usar la violencia.²⁴⁹

The violence was over; civil society should now move to the foreground. Poniatowska was prepared to play her part, and encouraged all those opposed to violent struggle to do likewise. Written at a time when many who objected to the use of force believed they could not support the Zapatistas,²⁵⁰ Poniatowska changed the emphasis to stress that the EZLN should be steered towards a pacific target: “Quizá con nuestra presencia tanto en el foro de Chiapas como en otros foros logremos asentar que aquí los que importan son [...] los campesinos, los indígenas, los pobres.”²⁵¹ The CND would provide the ideal opportunity.

Carlos Monsiváis: Ya no mi gobierno

[Chiapas] es el momento de las grandes interpretaciones, de las visiones de conjunto que ratifiquen [su] estatus. Un intelectual que no interprete a Chiapas estará listo, kaput. Carlos Monsiváis, February 1994.²⁵²

Monsiváis was one of the more prolific contributors to the Chiapas debate. Initially reluctant to judge a movement about which he knew little, like Poniatowska, he admitted that the Chiapas poor had reason to rebel. Indeed in 1986 Monsiváis had quoted campesinos who warned, “no pueden [los gobernadores] seguir sacrificando a todo Chiapas por todo México”, adding, “si Zapata viviera con nosotros estuviera”.²⁵³ Eight years later Zapata was a dynamic rallying force. Was Monsiváis surprised by the outbreak of violence? He was perhaps shocked by its scale. One aspect was certain: Monsiváis was against the force that brought the movement to world attention. From the outset, he postulated change by peaceful means.

At a time when writers were rushing to classify the nature of the rebellion, Monsiváis urged caution: “No hay que idealizar tan rápidamente a los alzados.”²⁵⁴ For Monsiváis, ‘Chiapas’ presented the glaring contradiction of economic and social development in Mexican society. He accepted that the 1910 Revolution had not reached the State and that the privileges of the elite were intolerable, but insisted that this did not excuse violence. Yet Monsiváis would not condemn the Zapatistas as terrorists, he preferred to wait until he was better informed. Monsiváis perceived only one certainty: the Chiapas rebellion emphasised the extent of misery caused by Federal policies. He challenged the description of the Zapatista leader as “a blonde-haired, green-eyed man”, acknowledging the indigenous nature of the rebellion. Scorning the government-sponsored conspiracy theory that had been employed “tan eficaz en el 68”, Monsiváis stressed that Salinas had ordered Mexican troops to fire against Mexican citizens.²⁵⁵ For

Monsiváis, the official strategy was clear: “todo mal es de fuera. Aquí se vive tan maravillosamente que si se quieren descontentos hay que importarlos.” Monsiváis also rejected notions of the influence of Marx upon the EZLN strategy; pointedly remarking that over one hundred years had elapsed since his death.²⁵⁶ Times had changed; Monsiváis anticipated Fuentes’s analysis: the Zapatista uprising would demand a new post-cold war vocabulary.²⁵⁷

These observations directly contrasted with Paz’s early views. Like Paz, Monsiváis was aware that the Zapatistas could not achieve a military victory against the Army.²⁵⁸ Yet whereas Paz interpreted this as evidence of the futility of rebellion, Monsiváis noted, “lo que, desde nuestro punto de vista, es actitud suicida, para quienes la viven es muchas otras cosas”.²⁵⁹ Although Monsiváis did not pretend to understand these other motives, even in the early days of the unrest he was examining the contrary perspectives of the metropolis and the Lacandón Jungle. There were two sides to the dispute; Monsiváis asked who fired the first shots: “los guerrilleros zapatistas o los finqueros, caciques, terratenientes, gobernadores, neoliberales de porquería”.²⁶⁰ Monsiváis’s objection to violence included that of the political and economic elite. Following the government counter-attack, in common with Fuentes and Poniatowska, Monsiváis co-signed many letters of protest.²⁶¹ To illustrate that many people had become detached from the government, he quoted the attitude of “un funcionario”: “ya no *mi* gobierno”.²⁶² Monsiváis’s readers would not need to have the irony of the stress pointed out: Monsiváis had never supported Salinas and had worked to ensure that the popular will prevailed in 1988.

Monsiváis underlined that Salinas was out of touch with Mexican reality; recalling a recent presidential claim: "Nadie podrá decir de ahora en adelante, que hay un solo mexicano olvidado en México."²⁶³ Yet the Zapatistas emphasised the intolerable living conditions in Chiapas; evidence that no-one could overlook. Pronasol, Monsiváis maintained, should be renamed "Tronasol". It was a failure; without political reform Mexico could not modernise. Monsiváis was sceptical about Salinas's consequent pledges to assist the people of Chiapas. He asked, "¿hasta qué punto las promesas de ayuda exorbitante a Chiapas sólo dependen del terror que provoca el EZLN?" and predicted that talk of aid would last for one month.²⁶⁴ In June 1994 a US inspection concluded that the only tangible benefit to Chiapas had been the paving of some major roads.²⁶⁵ Monsiváis's insight into political and economic life was evident in January 1994: he voiced concerns that would be echoed after the Salinas's downfall. Criticising the measures that culminated in the signing of the TLC, Monsiváis wrote: "la economía no crece pero la falta de alternativas reales ayuda al manejo publicitario del arcoiris". The government, he continued, knew there were guerrillas in Chiapas and that the majority living there could barely subsist, but chose to ignore both in the interests of economic and political order. Salinas was not the only one to blame: Monsiváis claimed the entire country had disregarded the issue.²⁶⁶

Reflecting the debate stimulated by the government's decision to offer a pardon to the rebels and Marcos's, "¿De qué nos van a perdonar?", Monsiváis asked, "¿cómo se distribuye el sentimiento de culpa entre los distintos sectores?"²⁶⁷ The following week he explored a variety of answers.²⁶⁸ Again mocking Salinas's initiatives, on this occasion Conaculta, Monsiváis proposed the formation of an organisation to establish responsibility: the Consejo Nacional de la Culpa (Conaculpa). Using the technique he

employed for the tenth anniversary of Tlatelolco,²⁶⁹ Monsiváis "interviewed" several members of influential society, all of whom denied liability. Their "responses" revealed Monsiváis's views about the racism pervading Mexican society: the Zapatistas were victims of their history; Indians brought misery on themselves; it was an indigenous trait not to better oneself.²⁷⁰ The following month, Monsiváis quoted Absalón Castellanos who, when released by the Zapatistas, said; "no me arrepiento de nada". With a generous measure of irony, Monsiváis added, "su tradición lo justifica y lo premia, su tradición exige que nunca dude de la grandeza de sus acciones". Monsiváis shrewdly chose Castellanos as a representative of the ruling class. Few believed Castellanos to be innocent and the release of the former governor had increased support for the EZLN.²⁷¹ Monsiváis was scathing, but humorous. The initial outburst of violence was over and, with a wry smile, he examined the prevalent attitudes towards race.

Monsiváis rejected the perspective that Indians were pawns in the ambitions of others:

"Son terroristas, no son indígenas", como si los indígenas sólo pudiesen ser eso, indígenas, una abstracción aterrada, ni humanistas ni terroristas; se reitera: "se les engañó, ellos no sabían, se les llevó a la fuerza", como si las razones morales de la miseria fuesen incomprensibles para quienes viven.²⁷²

He emphasised that Indians were human beings with all the associated vices and virtues; and above all, Mexicans. Confronting the issue of racism put Monsiváis at odds with other writers: Paz celebrated the triumph of mestizaje in Mexico, while Enrique Krauze claimed that the two Indian presidents, Benito Juárez and Porfirio Díaz, proved political integration. Krauze affirmed that conditions in Chiapas were an exception not a rule, adding that further evidence of successful mestizaje could be found in Argentina and

Chile.²⁷³ Mapuche Chilean, Aukan Huilcaman Paillama, then accused Krauze of distorting the facts. He explained that racism was prevalent throughout Latin America: Chile denied its native population; only Cuba and Uruguay, whose indigenous peoples had been exterminated, were free from prejudice.²⁷⁴

Agreeing with Huilcaman Paillama, Monsiváis declared that although Mexicans may not believe in a superior race, there was a deep conviction of an inferior one. This “racismo de exclusión” had begun at Conquest. The Zapatista rebellion ensured that, “hoy, se reconoce que la sociedad mexicana es racista, luego de un siglo de negarlo mentirosamente”. Pointing to Indian figures in Mexican history, among them Krauze’s examples of presidents Juárez and Díaz, Monsiváis found that each one was seen as an “Indio Genial, las excepciones que confirman la regla”.²⁷⁵ There was no miracle of mestizaje: “[Mexico] is a racist country. [...] The idea of the indígena as inferior is widely accepted. Five or ten years ago the word “Indian” was an insult.” He added that many Mexicans were reassessing their identity: “The indigenous problem is now a national problem, not just a topic for anthropologists and intellectuals.” Monsiváis underlined that debates had taken place, but they had been limited to academic circles. The Zapatistas brought the “indigenous problem” to national attention opening up the discussions. There had already been partial success: “For a minority, especially the youngsters, racism is a scandal.”²⁷⁶ In an effort, perhaps, to convince those who sustained there was no racism in Mexico, Monsiváis addressed the topic in *Vuelta*. It is a tribute to Paz that this article was published, particularly as it appeared in the edition immediately before the election. Stressing the widespread support for the Zapatistas, Monsiváis depicted a growing conviction that Mexico was rooted “en la más atroz

desigualdad".²⁷⁷ He perceived a transformation of society was taking place, and marked the San Cristóbal negotiations as the watershed.²⁷⁸

In mid-January, Monsiváis pointed out the benefits brought by the Zapatistas and the paradox this presented: "Quienes, por numerosas razones, rechazamos la vía armada, llegamos a una conclusión un tanto dolorosa: todos usamos los resultados del levamiento como si hubiésemos necesitado profundamente." He admitted he was increasingly aware of the gains achieved by the violence: racism was firmly placed on the Mexican agenda; there was a freer press; corrupt local governments in Chiapas were exposed; the inadequacies of national economic policies were revealed; a factors of additional importance in an election year. Yet Monsiváis was cautious: had too much been achieved too quickly? "¿No le cuelgas demasiados milagros a lo de Chiapas? ¿Tantas cosas en apenas tres semanas? Es como si describieras una aparición y no una rebelión."²⁷⁹ "The apparition" was undoubtedly a reference to the Zapatista spokesman. The ambiguous figure of Marcos was already overshadowing reports from the region.

Chronicling the change of Mexican perceptions following the EZLN uprising, Monsiváis examined the balaclava, that had rapidly become the symbol of Chiapas. Far from sinister garments, the black woollen hats were seen as "intrínsecamente gracioso".²⁸⁰ Monsiváis, who had written about the profusion of busts of Benito Juárez in Mexico,²⁸¹ denoted the balaclava "la otra cabeza de Juárez". Juárez was the acceptable "Indio Genial", whereas the EZLN mask signified that Indians had been denied a human face and status. The Zapatistas' determination to end their suffering had given them a sense of dignity; similarly, 'Chiapas' was no longer merely Mexico's backward, forgotten State, but signified the resolute resistance of the underdogs.

Monsiváis gave examples, “desde los comerciantes que esperan a Colosio a un lado del carretera con una manta que dice ‘Si no nos hacen caso habrá otro Chiapas’, a la mujer que le reclama a su marido: ‘Si sigues viendo a esa cusca, aquí arde Chiapas’”.²⁸²

Although Monsiváis might applaud such attitudes, he could not forget the ambiguous origins and purpose of the Zapatistas; above all, the resort to arms that brought them to public attention.

The peace negotiations warned Monsiváis to the Zapatista spokesman.

Monsiváis conceded that Marcos was, “el interlocutor más constante de la opinión pública y una referencia inevitable de la sociedad civil”. After much deliberation, Monsiváis declared that he believed the words and actions of the Zapatista spokesman to be genuine; Marcos represented the people of Chiapas. He stressed that he had not been duped by Marcos; his opinion was that of a journalist hardened by cynicism (“el escudo de la profesión, su método de salud mental”). Monsiváis was stirred by the Zapatistas’ insistence that they rebelled to have a voice in political and economic affairs. He had reservations, but they were not restricted to the EZLN. Monsiváis explained his three-fold opposition: “De la violencia, del autoritarismo del sistema político y de la atroz desigualdad, ese logro del capitalismo salvaje que tan persuasivamente (hasta hace dos meses) santificaba con promesas el régimen.”²⁸³

“I wrote a lot about Chiapas”: Monsiváis acknowledged his contribution to the debates.²⁸⁴ His articles appeared in a wide range of newspapers and political magazines, thus satisfying Roderic Camp’s intellectual criterion of regularly providing analyses to a large audience.²⁸⁵ Although his basic sentiments were consistent, Monsiváis altered his emphasis to accommodate the publications’ different political leanings. One may

presume that Monsiváis's anti-government line would have been supported by readers of *Proceso*, yet Monsiváis also had a regular column in *El Financiero*, alongside articles expressing strong right-wing views.²⁸⁶ Whereas Poniatowska refused to write for *Nexos* after its publication of anti-Zapatista propaganda,²⁸⁷ Monsiváis appeared in a televised debate with the magazine's editors. Monsiváis was both blunt and persuasive:

[No estoy] defensor de oficio de los Zapatistas ni que yo vea con buenos ojos los asesinatos cometidos, ni los muertos de la primera semana de enero. Lo que quiero decir es muy simple: en Chiapas no había un estado de derecho. En eso todos podemos estar de acuerdo.²⁸⁸

Monsiváis perhaps sought to influence the *Nexos* audience from within. Focusing upon undisputed facts ensured that Monsiváis was not alienated: this was not the place to condemn the government's use of coercion. He adopted a similar tactic in *Vuelta*: "No localizo en la inmensa mayoría de los simpatizantes del EZLN proclividad alguna por la vía armada."²⁸⁹ Monsiváis encouraged readers to keep an open mind, stressing that supporting the Zapatistas did not signify endorsing armed struggle.

The Zapatistas' use of force placed Monsiváis in a dilemma; the extent of his unease was apparent in his essays. Depicting his own position, perhaps, Monsiváis described middle-class Mexicans as "dividido entre su alegría antigubernamente, su aceptación de las razones morales de los indígenas chiapanecos y su rechazo a la violencia".²⁹⁰ Monsiváis cited Marcos, "podrán cuestionar el camino, pero nunca las causas", and agreed that the Zapatistas had endured appalling circumstances.²⁹¹ Nonetheless, Monsiváis could not condone their use of force: "I'm against any kind of violence. [...] About three hundred people died at the beginning of January. I can't endorse this. But I'm also against the government and especially against the ruling classes in Chiapas. My position is a difficult one."²⁹² Monsiváis was ethically opposed

to a movement he could not help admiring. Yet he acknowledged that Mexicans had been aware of the conditions in Chiapas that led the Zapatistas to rebel: "No sólo el gobierno *sabía* de la existencia de la guerrilla [...sino] también la sociedad *sabía* de la hondura de la miseria y el desastre, y sólo pagó al respecto tributos verbales."²⁹³ In June 1995, Monsiváis voiced a reluctant conclusion: "It costs a great deal to say it but, if [the Zapatistas] hadn't used violence no-one would have paid attention to their demands."²⁹⁴ The taking of four Chiapas highland towns exposed the hitherto ignored inadequacies of national economic policies and the prevalent racism, and forced Mexicans to address them.

The CND: Where a man with a god inside him met idols with feet of clay

Que haya ocurrido algo tan loco, tan imposible, tan fértil, tan suave, [...] si lo leo en una novela, no lo creo. Carmen Boullosa, August 1994.²⁹⁵

The CND was intended to be a showcase for civil society, emphasising the important role all Mexicans could play in political and social life. Marcos wanted a large, representative crowd to discuss the national will for democracy; personal invitations to intellectuals appeared in the national press. Recipients were placed in an awkward position: to go would be seen as an endorsement of the movement; to refuse would be tantamount to a missed opportunity for direct political comment, not to mention witnessing such a unique event and meeting the enigmatic spokesman. The predicament was summed up by *La Jornada*: "desprueba la Convención, pero le gustaría ir".²⁹⁶ Fuentes, Monsiváis, and Poniatowska were forced to face their dilemmas about the Zapatistas' resort to arms; Paz was not on the guest-list.

Anxious for Fuentes to attend, Marcos began his invitation by quoting his work. In 1990 Fuentes had depicted Mexico in crisis: development had occurred without justice; moreover, "la modernización no puede alcanzarse a costa de las pequeñas comunidades agrarias, el mundo olvidado de Villa y Zapata".²⁹⁷ Marcos explained that Fuentes aptly described the situation of the Chiapas campesinos at the end of 1993.²⁹⁸ It was an astute tactic, in 1969 Fuentes had underlined the writers' responsibility: "Debemos preguntarnos cuál será el destino de las palabras en una sociedad como la nuestra".²⁹⁹ Marcos urged Fuentes to face the reality of his words. At the CND, Marcos continued, ideas and theories would be discussed, and democratic resolutions explored. Marcos illustrated the need for a large attendance: "Debo hacer todo lo posible para convencerlo a usted de que, para que las armas callen, deben hacer las ideas, y deben hablar fuerte, más fuerte que las balas." If Salinas recognised the need for intellectual support, Marcos was also aware of its value. A sizeable intellectual presence at the CND would add legitimacy to the Zapatistas' stance. Aware of the paradoxical nature of a peaceful convention summoned by armed rebels, Marcos urged Fuentes to keep an open mind: "Sí, una convención pacífica, convocada por violentos. Sí, una convención que insista en la legalidad convocada por ilegales." Recalling Fuentes's statements about the inequality of Mexican society and the need for change, Marcos entreated Fuentes to overlook the Zapatistas' contradictions and to focus upon the similarities between them: "Sólo le decimos que somos mexicanos (como usted), que queremos democracia (como usted), que queremos libertad (como usted), que queremos justicia (como usted). ¿Qué de malo tendría un encuentro entre mexicanos así?"³⁰⁰ The invitation encouraged Fuentes to come down from the fence and to transfer his expressions of sympathy into practical dialogue.

When asked why he had not attended the CND, Fuentes diplomatically replied that he was not in Mexico at the time and regretted not having met the Zapatista spokesman.³⁰¹ Fuentes's reply to Marcos told a different story: Fuentes may have been sympathetic to the aims of the CND, but his letter revealed doubts about the EZLN. He admitted that the rebellion forced Mexicans to re-evaluate modernity and progress: "Su intuición, [...] me abre los ojos." Fuentes, however, reiterated his praise of Salinas for choosing dialogue rather than violent retaliation. He had evidently forgotten the government's immediate response of force and focused upon the Zapatistas' aggression. In an apparent change of stance from his comments in January to April,³⁰² Fuentes asked, "¿tienen ustedes que tomar las armas? [...] Yo insistiré que no. Yo insistiré en que se sigan hasta agotarse las vías del derecho y cuando se agoten, buscar nuevas vías políticas."³⁰³ Fuentes, who had written with sympathy and sensitivity about the plight of the Chiapas poor, disregarded their numerous peaceful attempts to achieve justice.³⁰⁴ As Fuentes himself indicated, the Zapatistas' resort to arms drew attention to the situation in Chiapas. In recommending the EZLN to use legal and political means to obtain their rights, Fuentes seemed to be far removed from the Zapatistas' interpretation of Chiapas life and from his own work of six months earlier.

Fuentes did, albeit in a patronising way, acknowledge the distinction between his background and that of the Zapatistas:

Yo no soy un campesino indígena chiapaneco. Quizas no tengo la claridad mental o la experiencia necesaria para meterme en piel de ustedes y sentir lo que ustedes sienten. [...] Yo voto porque nuestro país encuentre vías que cierran el paso a la violencia, que no hagan necesaria una acción como la que ustedes iniciaron el 1 de enero.³⁰⁵

This was the crux of the issue: Fuentes had a name, a face, and a vote; whereas the indigenous campesinos of Chiapas claimed that their constitutional rights were denied.³⁰⁶ Fuentes tried to understand their plight, but the differences were too great. He stated he may not have the "claridad mental" to comprehend their position; was his use ironic? Fuentes was writing to Marcos, like him, neither a campesino nor an Indian. If Fuentes was implying that Marcos had no real sense of the Indians' circumstances, he overlooked the fact that Marcos put himself under the campesinos' skins by living with them for ten years; he gained their confidence and sufficient legitimacy for him to be elected as their spokesman.

Fuentes concluded that it was too late for the Zapatistas to find another route to democracy. For Fuentes, the priority was, and perhaps always had been, "sumar fuerzas ahora para que la vía que ustedes eligieron no tenga que repetirse".³⁰⁷ Yet was not the CND a different course; a peaceful channel designed to give voices to diverse sectors of the population with the aim of reaching democratic solutions? Violence was no longer an issue; the fighting had ended. Here, perhaps, is the key to Fuentes's attitude towards the Zapatistas: in the early days of the conflict, Fuentes was compassionate and conciliatory; the need for peace made him attentive to the rebels' demands. Later, in the then pacific setting, Fuentes's support lessened; he could not forget the Zapatistas' resort to arms. Fuentes's aversion to combat was paramount. From January to March 1994, when the Zapatistas' future course was unclear, Fuentes worked to ensure that the battleground remained in the media. By August, the immediate danger of widespread bloodshed had been averted and there was evidence that the EZLN preferred dialogue to action. Fuentes then distanced himself, fighting shy of talks with the armed rebels. His presence at the CND would have given the impression that he supported the Zapatistas;

he could not make this concession; to have done so may have forfeited any political influence that he enjoyed. To retain his "independence" Fuentes chose not to go to Chiapas. Although flattered to have been asked, in refusing Fuentes suggested that the invitation be extended to the "grupo plural de mexicanos y mexicanas distinguidos", the Grupo San Angel. Fuentes assumed that it would send a delegation.³⁰⁸ Having confronted his dilemma, Fuentes used the group as a shield to protect himself from a direct encounter with the rebels.

Marcos also quoted Krauze when inviting him to the CND. The request was sent belatedly; was Marcos recalling the 1992 Coloquio? The Zapatista spokesman explained that the delay was due to reticence on his part: he wanted to word it so that Krauze could not possibly refuse.³⁰⁹ Krauze was clearly impressed by Marcos's letter: "en el mejor sentido de la palabra, es una carta seductora"; but stated the CND contradicted its democratic aims by assuming a national representation that it did not possess. He asked how six thousand people could formulate a new national project for Mexico's ninety million inhabitants; but added that, as a historian, he would like to observe the CND.³¹⁰ Krauze declined the invitation on the grounds that he could not endorse a convention born from an armed struggle. In so doing he undoubtedly earned the approval of his mentor, Paz. Krauze nonetheless travelled to Chiapas hoping to interview Marcos before the Convention, and took with him a composition to be discussed at the CND. After waiting in vain for two days, Krauze returned to Mexico City with his unread paper.³¹¹ Marcos's invitation to the Grupo San Angel was also rejected. Instead, the group offered to meet Marcos after the conference.³¹² Like Krauze, the group could not be seen to sympathise with the Zapatistas, yet there was evidently no obstacle to holding private talks with the rebel spokesman.

The CND forced Monsiváis to make public his concerns about the Zapatistas' use of force: eager for the "cynical journalist" to attend, Marcos wrote to Monsiváis, sending a copy to *La Jornada*. It appeared alongside that to Krauze.³¹³ A major issue was whether Monsiváis should be called "tú" or "usted". The topic was left unresolved: Marcos applied both forms, making two formal invitations. Behind the comical facade, however, a more serious message can be perceived: Monsiváis had yet to commit himself to the Zapatista cause; was Monsiváis a *compañero* or a critic; close to or distant from Marcos? In reply, Monsiváis used "tú", defending his choice with the explanation that the two meanings had lost their significance: "Cuando con frecuencia el usted aproxima (porque inventa el respeto) y el tú distancia (porque malgasta la familiaridad)."³¹⁴ Using humour to extract himself from this delicate situation, Monsiváis added that no-one could address a hooded guerrilla as "usted". Just as Marcos used the balaclava to hide his identity, so Monsiváis employed it to mask close contact with the EZLN.

The form of greeting resolved, what remained was whether or not Monsiváis should attend the CND. Monsiváis admitted that the invitation increased his internal conflict; but, unlike Fuentes, he frankly discussed his position:

Estoy convencido del agotamiento del sistema político, de su agonía multiplicada por ineptitudes e impunidades, y de la barbarie ejercida en nombre de estabilidad. [...] Como la mayoría, resiento los agravios monstruosos del neoliberalismo, y sus pirámides de concentración del ingreso.³¹⁵

Monsiváis was emphatic in his anti-government statement; and claimed to speak for the majority when he voiced his abhorrence of neoliberal policies. Yet Monsiváis was well aware of the paradoxical nature of a peaceful convention summoned by armed rebels.

Recalling the invitation to Fuentes,³¹⁶ Monsiváis asked if talks were possible from a position of violence. He also warned that the meeting would be dominated by the extreme Left: "No quiero imaginarme los sermones." However, Monsiváis recognised the merit of civil society discussions, particularly before the presidential election; and he believed that the Zapatistas and the majority of those travelling to the CND sought peace. He would, therefore, go to the Convention but, in accepting, Monsiváis characteristically hid behind a satirical shield:

¿Cómo perderme la oportunidad de cronicar otro Condominio de Babel, [...] o, así lo espero y contraviniendo mi pesimismo, cómo no atestiguar un gran acto crítico y autocrítico de sectores de la izquierda y centro-izquierda en su búsqueda justa de alternativas democráticas?³¹⁷

Monsiváis would attend the CND as a journalist, because he could not resist the prospect of ironic comment.

Before travelling to Chiapas, Monsiváis identified four distinct stages of the Zapatista strategy. The article reflected Monsiváis's close following of the rebellion and his careful scrutiny of the communiqués. In early January, Monsiváis had been against the Zapatistas' use of force. The talks in San Cristóbal, Monsiváis sustained, changed perspectives: thanks to Marcos's "maestría comunicacional", the Zapatistas were no longer seen as "profesionales de la violencia", but "luchadores de métodos equivocados". The third phase, the rejection of the peace agreement by the indigenous communities, appeared to Monsiváis to herald a resumption of force. Yet the CND, Monsiváis affirmed, indicated that the Zapatistas had decided to relinquish their territory; to extend the dialogue to civil society through the intellectual community. This interpretation reveals the importance of intellectuals to the Zapatistas and explains

why Marcos wanted so many to attend the CND. For Monsiváis, the Convention signified a rejection of armed combat in favour of pacific, constructive debate.³¹⁸

In an early interview, Marcos expressed admiration for certain writers,³¹⁹ the high esteem in which he held Poniatowska was apparent when Marcos invited her to Chiapas in advance of the CND. She thus had the opportunity for direct dialogue that the Grupo San Angel and Krauze sought in vain. In his letter to Poniatowska, Marcos used affectionate irony; he adopted the form of a medieval knight, and used phrases of courtly love.³²⁰ Clearly flattered, Poniatowska travelled to Chiapas in the company of her children and her "hijo postizo", Manuel Fernández.³²¹ In so doing she went against the wishes of the Grupo San Angel: "I was told that I couldn't go, who knows why, that the group couldn't intervene politically or that members couldn't manifest their sympathies." The Grupo San Angel was opposed to Poniatowska meeting Marcos, yet it suggested talks with the Zapatista spokesman after the CND. It appears that the group's internal politics took precedence over events of potential national importance. Poniatowska immediately left the group: "I said goodbye. As the French say, 'bonsoir et merci', but I didn't say thank you!"³²²

Poniatowska interviewed Marcos at length; an abbreviated version was published in the days preceding the CND.³²³ By stressing the presence of her children, Poniatowska revealed her lack of fear in visiting the Zapatista territory. Although they are adults (information that she did not supply) Poniatowska's tone was that of a family outing. Meeting the Zapatista spokesman and experiencing the conditions in Chiapas increased Poniatowska's sympathy for the EZLN cause. She referred to Marcos as "el sup" (an abbreviation of "Supercomandante Marcos", the nickname given to Marcos by

his supporters) but explained that she respectfully called him "Subcomandante": "Yo jamás me atreveré a tutearlo".³²⁴ Yet Poniatowska emphasised there was nothing alarming in the Zapatistas, any warlike behaviour was merely for the press; indeed, EZLN members, Marcos included, removed their masks in her presence.³²⁵

In her introduction, Poniatowska depicted the tranquillity of her surroundings, and the peaceful nature of those she met there as they prepared for the CND:

Miro los ojos del subcomandante; [...] en ellos hay una gran bondad. [...] Seguiré oyendo pas, pas, pas, pas [...] los machetes de los constructores que con tan poquito traen al humanismo griego a la selva. "Esta gente es buena", "esta gente tiene la voluntad de paz", "esta gente es como las lianas, flexible", [...] la certeza retumba una y otra vez. [...] ¿O es que la neblina chiapaneca se mete en los ojos?³²⁶

Poniatowska underlined her presence in the area and that she was following her senses. Her approval of the Zapatistas did not stem from ideological blindness, as Paz might say, nor the power of Marcos's seductive persuasion, but the experience of being there. If her vision was blurred, it was due to the Chiapas clouds and not her preconceptions. In the Lacandón Jungle, Poniatowska confronted her dilemma of the Zapatistas' use of force. She went to Chiapas with an open mind and, after hearing the sounds of the jungle, meeting members of the EZLN, and looking into the eyes of Marcos, Poniatowska became convinced of the merits of the rebels' cause. By voicing these sentiments as a prologue, Poniatowska urged her readers to agree with her.

Poniatowska juxtaposed this scene with the events of early January 1994: "El *Sup* hace chistes, ríen sus ojos. [...] Tras de él, el comandante *Moisés* es su réplica. [...] *Moisés* fue el temible carcelero de Absalón Castellanos durante los treinta días de su

cautiverio."³²⁷ It was an astute association: the former governor may have been imprisoned against his will, but many believed that targeting him was justified. Charges of misconduct against Castellanos ranged from attacks on property to the assassination of 800 campesinos.³²⁸ Furthermore, the Zapatistas released Castellanos unharmed. A photograph of a jovial Moisés, his eyes shining behind his balaclava, was included to emphasise that he was not a demon: Poniadowska's message was that the Zapatistas' claims were justified; their objective was peace.

Again employing a strategy she had used in 1968,³²⁹ Poniadowska articulated the reservations of many Mexicans about the Zapatistas. She questioned Marcos about fears of further bloodshed if the PRI were to win the forthcoming election, and repeated the charge that he was seeking to further his own ambitions rather than promoting the Indians' cause. In reply, Marcos ruled out further aggression and stressed he was the Indians' spokesman not their manipulator. All decisions, he reiterated, were made by the indigenous communities; one person alone could not impose his will on such widespread and diverse people. Like his replica Moisés, Marcos was just another member of the EZLN. Marcos continued that many viewed the Indians as passive in the face of change and unable to articulate their views; thus it was assumed that Marcos was using them to fight for his ideals. Strongly refuting this charge, Marcos underlined that Mexico's persistent racism had inflated perceptions of his importance within the movement.³³⁰ Such notions were a symptom of the national misunderstanding that had left the Indians marginalised and ignored:

Este país descubre Chiapas el 1 de enero de 1994. Nosotros preguntamos: ¿Va a tener que repetirse ese primero de enero en [...] todas las partes donde hay comunidades indígenas? [...] ¿Era necesario hacer una guerra para que los mexicanos descubrieron a que en Chiapas se viola a los indígenas?³³¹

His question was rhetorical, combat had been necessary to draw attention to the Zapatistas' cause: previous attempts had been ignored. Marcos both defended the use of arms and illustrated the value of media coverage of the events. The Zapatistas' resort to force reached the headlines compelling the country to notice their suffering.

Marcos stressed the Zapatistas' belief in the value of civil society, acknowledging its contribution to the cease-fire of early January 1994: "No fue una concesión de Salinas, ni fue una concesión nuestra, nos la impusieron a los dos [...] la manifestación masiva de la sociedad civil."³³² Marcos ascertained that as leaders of public opinion Poniatowska and her peers had helped to stop the fighting. On 9 January Poniatowska had voiced feelings of inadequacy;³³³ six months later, Marcos illustrated her worth. Rather than bore the Mexican public with their views, as Paz maintained, writers had forced a cease-fire, and had kept the Zapatista cause in the press without the need for further bloodshed. However, the cease-fire was not a conclusion, but an interlude; the CND was intended to posit solutions. Intellectuals had played an important part, but there was still work to be done.

Monsiváis and Poniatowska showed their commitment to civil society by attending the CND, but many of their peers felt unable to make this compromise. Marcos voiced the Zapatistas' disappointment that so many intellectuals stayed away:

Nos sentimos defraudados y desilusionados por algunas gentes de opinión, las mentes pensantes que escriben en los medios de información, quienes han preferido una actitud de espectadores, de distanciamiento. Pienso que tuvieron temor de que finalmente la Convención termine [...] pronunciándose por la violencia como único camino que queda a la nación y que [...] los intelectuales se vean atrapados en esa situación. [...Ellos] se han

convertido en cómplices del partido del Estado y del presidencialismo porque la Convención es abierta y no se atrevieron a participar.³³⁴

Marcos was evidently trying to use intellectuals to keep the Zapatista struggle on the national and political agenda before the election. Did Marcos really see those who refused to attend the CND as State puppets? Those who did go concurred that it was a rewarding experience. Hermann Bellinghausen claimed, "que permite una comprensión mayor de lo que es este movimiento, y espero que se justifique en puntos de vista más literarios." Monsiváis added, the Zapatistas "me hayan permitido conocer la selva en un viaje donde los accidentes políticos borraron la emoción turística que sólo posteriormente recobré de manera fragmentaria".³³⁵

In his introductory speech, Marcos depicted the Convention's stage as, "el Arca de Noé, [...] el barco selvático de Fitzcarraldo, [...] el navío pirata".³³⁶ Staged in the jungle, at the height of the wet season, such imagery was surely tempting fate. A torrential storm brought the CND to an abrupt, premature end. The carefully constructed stage provided inadequate protection, and collapsed on top of those sheltering underneath it. In the words of Poniatowska:

Fuimos arrojados pálidos y tiernos sobre la tierra ancha, caímos de golpe y las olas corrieron tras de nosotros. [...] La tierra se volvió lodo, el agua comenzó a correr entre las tiendas de campaña montadas al lado del presidium, subió de nivel, se violentó y llegó hasta la rodilla. Todos fuimos ídolos con pies de barro.³³⁷

Physical discomfort, the adverse climate, and its dramatic, premature ending notwithstanding, Poniatowska was clearly moved by the experience of the CND. She described Marcos as a man, "que tiene un dios adentro", depicting the passion of his discourse and the changes he inspired: "¡Qué lejos está Marcos de la vieja retórica de la

izquierda mexicana! [...] Sus palabras son nuevas, son jóvenes, se mueven, avanzan, salen de fuego de su pecho."³³⁸ Poniowska clearly supported Fuentes's view that the Zapatistas inspired a fresh, post-communist vocabulary but, for her, it was stimulated by their spokesman. He was leading a new movement in which language played an important role. Poniowska responded to the challenge and encouraged others to do likewise. Naturally sympathetic towards the Zapatistas, she worked to ensure that the initial violence need not be repeated and that the issues raised were addressed by civil society.

"La ironía no se acomoda aquí": if Monsiváis had hidden behind an ironic shield when accepting his invitation, he was the first to admit that it provided inadequate protection against the physical conditions in Chiapas. In his account of the CND, Monsiváis concentrated upon the difficulties suffered, beginning with the thirty hour journey from San Cristóbal through the jungle, with numerous check-points.³³⁹ Many of the CND guests complained, but the traditional privileges demanded by their class and status no longer applied: they were in Zapatista territory, sharing circumstances that were a daily reality for those living there. "¡Qué bueno que esto nos esté pasando para que sepamos lo que han sufrido los zapatistas!" Poniowska repeated the "voz lacrimosa" of an anonymous witness.³⁴⁰ While Monsiváis was aware that visitors to the CND could not expect to be cosseted, he frankly admitted his inability to withstand the inconveniences. Slipping in the mud, he injured his ankle:

Me siento agotado. [...] La mochila me pasa como si fuera el currículum de un aspirante a secretario de Estado. La escena es alucinante y sólo la autocompasión en la que me refugio me impide descubrir sus vetas literarias. ¡Qué reparto de funciones visuales! Los soldados inmóviles y, hasta donde es posible percibirlos, indiferentes, [...] el riesgo de las púas, las piedras puntiagudas que se esparcen como trampas para los turistas. Mis

habilidades campiranas son perfectibles. Tropiezo y me toca la regañada del dolor.³⁴¹

Unlike Poniatowska's informant, Monsiváis found little to be gained from sharing the Zapatistas' experiences: "It didn't matter to me, I knew what life was like for me. I wasn't thinking in comparative terms!"³⁴²

Monsiváis was, however, moved by the CND. He described the opening parade of Zapatista soldiers as "uno de los actos más bellos y más notables por su capacidad de desnuda sinceridad".³⁴³ Their wooden replica weapons decorated with white cloth were, Monsiváis explained, "armas que aspiran a ser inútiles". Monsiváis described how Marcos stood before the crowd and offered to remove his balaclava. The response was an overwhelming "¡NO!".³⁴⁴ Marcos had become a "leyenda viva": the mask both protected and perpetuated this image. Monsiváis acknowledged that without the EZLN there would be no will for change in Mexico. Depicting his own reaction, perhaps, Monsiváis conceded that the Zapatistas inspired into action those who a few months ago were, "hundidos en la apatía o en la incapacidad de trascender su localismo o en el desaliento, por el éxito del régimen, el aplastamiento de los movimientos populares, las asimilaciones de Pronasol".³⁴⁵ Monsiváis admitted, "the Zapatistas did a good job. They recovered Mexico's mental health."

The CND was a disaster, spoilt by rain. It was also unfortunately dominated by those on the far left who controlled the dialogue and made discussion impossible. But it was a good experience, a very good experience. Part of the intellectual community, most of the intellectual community, still has a useful role in Mexico.³⁴⁶

Although the Convention proved to be a washout, rather than a watershed in Mexico's democratic transition, its symbolic value endured. Monsiváis explained that

the crowd was far more representative of the population than its number suggested. Many were delegates for a diverse range of groups.³⁴⁷ This perception, based on first-hand observation, contrasted with Krauze's condemnation of the CND in advance as unrepresentative and politically biased.³⁴⁸ Monsiváis recalled the motives of those who made the journey: "Los convencionalistas han venido hasta acá para ver, admirar, reconstruirse políticamente, discutir en corrillos, ayudarse unos a otros."³⁴⁹ In February 1994, Fuentes stated that the Zapatista rebellion demanded a fresh, new post-communist vocabulary.³⁵⁰ Six months later, Monsiváis went a stage further: the EZLN was providing a platform from which political reconstruction could flourish.

Recoiling from the basic ablution facilities, Civic Alliance member, Primitivo Rodríguez, reportedly asked for the CND to be transferred to the Hotel Sheraton, Mexico City.³⁵¹ In the aftermath of the CND, Monsiváis proposed that the next meeting be held in the Estadio Azteca, Mexico City. Was Monsiváis voicing sentiments similar to those of Rodríguez? For Monsiváis a more central location would "a todos nos queda más cerca".³⁵² He wanted the discussions to continue, to unify Mexican society and to extend the Zapatista ideals throughout the Republic. Staging a second CND in Mexico City would bring the debate to the heart of the nation; particularly in the Estadia Azteca, the Mecca of Mexican popular emotions and the site of many national victories.

The 1994 Presidential Election

How do you tell a gringo at a cock-fight?

He brings a duck.

How do you tell a dummy at a cock-fight?

He bets on the duck.

How do you tell the PRlista at the cock-fight?

He bets on the duck - and the duck wins. Mexican popular saying July 1994.³⁵³

Paz openly supported the PRI candidate, Ernesto Zedillo. Like most Mexicans, he had been shocked by the assassination of Colosio, interpreting it as “un signo ominoso” of ungovernability. He appealed for an end to the violence, including “los excesos verbales e ideológicos”.³⁵⁴ Although not directly apportioning blame, Paz connected Colosio’s death to the Zapatista movement, and those who defended it: “Que han enturbiado el proceso electoral y comprometido la paz de la nación.” He stressed, “la democracia comienza con elecciones libres, limpias y pacíficas”. Praising Colosio as a politician who “luchaba pacíficamente [...] por sus ideas”, Paz called for calm and advocated tolerance: “Nuestros vecinos tienen derecho a pensar de una manera distinta a la nuestra y esto no los convierte en enemigos.” He recommended that the polemics in the press should stop: “las acusaciones irracionales, las calumnias innobles y los vituperios iracundos”.³⁵⁵ Yet in a barely disguised endorsement for the PRI, Paz ended, “descanse en paz Luis Donald Colosio y que México logre recobrase y siga su marcha”.³⁵⁶

Paz followed his own advice and remained on the sidelines. In August 1994 letters from the main presidential candidates, Zedillo (PRI), Diego Fernández de Cevallos (PAN), and Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas (PRD), were published in *Vuelta*; Zedillo’s appeared first and was twice as long as the others. Zedillo directly quoted Paz’s views on democracy: “Sin democracia los cambios son contraproducentes; mejor dicho: no

son cambios. [...] Defenderla [democracia] es defender la posibilidad del cambio." He pledged, "si el voto me favorece, mi presidencia será de carácter democrático".³⁵⁷

Although Fuentes had praised Salinas, on the eve of the election he showed a preference for an opposition victory at the polls: "Yo quisiera que ganara la oposición en esta elección, porque son menos los riesgos que corre este país con un triunfo de la oposición que con una permanencia del PRI." Typically, Fuentes did not specify his preferred candidate; perhaps his priority was to break the PRI monopoly. He applauded Salinas's economic policies, but stated that the PRI was unable to confront the problems ahead. Fuentes encouraged a high turn-out to ensure credible results and asked the victor to select a cabinet representative of prevalent political desires.³⁵⁸

This time, under the close scrutiny of Mexican and foreign observers, there were no computer failures; the outcome was a clear victory for the PRI.³⁵⁹ A jubilant Zedillo proclaimed his success to be the greatest democratic convention and, quoting Krauze, added that the CND had been a matter of six thousand people, not millions.³⁶⁰ Although the margin was less than on previous occasions, Monsiváis described the result as, "a disaster. It was one of the worst days of my life. Many people voted for the PRI because they didn't believe in an alternative."³⁶¹ Roger Bartra explained that the PRI took advantage of the unrest in Chiapas, portraying the PRD as advocates of disorder while promoting themselves as providers of stability.³⁶² Camp added that the PRI was a "known quantity"; after Colosio's assassination over two thirds of urban Mexicans saw Mexico's situation as "grave" or worse.³⁶³ Guillermo Sheridan affirmed that many believed the Zapatistas ensured the PRI victory: "Critics had been working for years to create democracy. 70 per cent of those who voted for Zedillo did so from fear. They

feared autonomy in Chiapas. Autonomy is unworkable; it is anti-democratic. Marcos damaged the democratic situation."³⁶⁴ Camp stressed, however, that the Zapatista rebellion led to electoral reforms that would assist the opposition parties; moreover, it revealed the political potential of other popular movements.³⁶⁵ Reflecting upon Zedillo's victory, Paz praised Salinas's policies, "que han sacado a México del atolladero económico". Paz maintained that many voted for Zedillo because he would continue Salinas's economic programmes; the PRI was the party of stability; above all, the electorate feared an escalation of violence.³⁶⁶ In so doing, Paz agreed with Monsiváis, Sheridan and Bartra,³⁶⁷ but Paz was clearly happy with the result. Paz saw Zedillo as the fulfilment of his hopes: "Hoy nos encaminamos hacia un México plural y pluralista."³⁶⁸

After the election, Fuentes reverted to his former stance regarding the EZLN. In September he repeated his comments that the Revolution had not reached Chiapas. Using Marcos's words, Fuentes reiterated that economic reform was insufficient without political change.³⁶⁹ Fuentes did not mention the violence that had brought public attention to the Zapatistas' cause, but in quoting their declarations, he seemed to condone the movement. He continued that Zedillo must address the discrepancies in Mexican society and complete the electoral reform. Fuentes praised Salinas's economic policies:

Yo creo que hay que abonarle al presidente Salinas el haber estabilizado la situación económica, haber limpiado las finanzas públicas, haber resuelto los problemas de caja. [...] Terminó con la inflación, estabilizó la moneda, creó importantes reservas para el país.

Like Paz, Fuentes believed that Salinas had left a sound economy; Zedillo's task would be to achieve democracy. Fuentes called for investigations into the assassinations of

Colosio and Ruiz Massieu, which he deemed to be connected.³⁷⁰ He suggested a reform of the judicial system and a separation of powers. Support for such measures was not new; Fuentes had proposed them in *Tiempo mexicano*. In 1972, Fuentes had been motivated to write a political book; in October 1994 he published a sequel, *Nuevo tiempo mexicano*, an examination of the events of 1994. The Zapatista rebellion may have cast a shadow over the end of Salinas's term of office;³⁷¹ but Fuentes celebrated the more successful aspects of his presidency and anticipated further improvements under Zedillo.

Some conclusions.

[Marcos es] una de las figuras que más sensiblemente ha enriquecido el panorama mexicano en estos años. [...] Marcos ha sido, con los defectos y equivocaciones, una figura necesaria, un autor de textos memorables, un interlocutor de la sociedad mexicana, algo más que una piedrecilla en el zapato del presidente. Carlos Monsiváis, May 1998.³⁷²

The violence in Chiapas was a blow to Mexican national pride; it illustrated that the country fostered racism and injustice, and that economic prosperity had not reached everyone.³⁷³ Yet as the fighting abated and the conflict was transferred to the newspaper pages, it presented "the greatest journalistic opening [...] in sixty-four years of PRI government". Public interest was keen: in early 1994, the circulation of *La Jornada* doubled.³⁷⁴ *Multivision* screened a two-part interview with Marcos that would have been impossible two years earlier.³⁷⁵ Advances in information technology enabled uncensored news to be sent from Chiapas; the Internet gave the Zapatistas a world-wide audience. The process was two-way: letters from as far afield as China were written to Salinas asking him to resolve the conflict.³⁷⁶

In 1950 Paz stated that intellectuals should, "learn to look reality in the face", adding, "if necessary, we must invent new words and new ideas for these new realities that are challenging us".³⁷⁷ In 1983 Paz pointed out the "lack of communication between the real Mexico and those who would be its spokesmen and interpreters."³⁷⁸ Yet, although he moderated his strong initial views about the Zapatistas, rather than postulate new solutions to changing circumstances, Paz's analysis was heavily based upon his thoughts of twenty-five years earlier, published in *Posdata*. The resurrection of this theory emphasised his distance from Fuentes; even though the two were not politically opposed. Fuentes's response was *Nuevo tiempo mexicano*, a revision of *Tiempo mexicano*. As the title suggests, Fuentes stressed the novelty of the circumstances of contemporary Mexico. Whereas Paz sought to present a last relic of the east/ west divide, Fuentes believed the Zapatista rebellion indicated the problems of modernity.

Whether or not it was a deliberate attempt to detract attention from the anti-government rebellion and its significant public sympathy, Paz tried to convert the debates in the press into an attack upon the beliefs of his supposed "adversaries" (anyone who disagreed with him). For Paz, the crisis was eclipsed by the need to resurrect past squabbles and to settle old scores: antagonisms that had been simmering for over twenty years. With his close links to Salinas, Paz was in the ideal position to influence government policy, but rather than participate in a plural, reasoned discussion to resolve the conflict, Paz used his considerable talents to denounce other writers.

In criticising his peers, Paz accused them of "juzgar sin oír".³⁷⁹ Although Paz may have disagreed with her verdict, he could not justly apply the charge to

Poniatowska. As Beth Jørgensen observed, Poniatowska thoroughly researched topics before commenting upon them.³⁸⁰ After listening to those who understood the situation in Chiapas, analysing the events as they unfolded and clarifying her thoughts in many articles, Poniatowska decided that the Zapatista rebellion was legitimate. She readily accepted her proportion of the blame for the conditions that led to the uprising and urged the rest of society to do likewise. Only then, in her view, could the disease that brought such violence be cured. Monsiváis, too, complied with Paz's model of an intellectual's duty. He resisted the temptation to make unconsidered judgements; making a scrupulous examination of the facts, adding logic and wit before reaching his conclusions. In February 1994, Monsiváis accepted that little was known about the Zapatistas' origins and voiced fears of the leaders' ulterior motives.³⁸¹ After visiting the Zapatista territory, Monsiváis, like Poniatowska, concluded that Marcos's motives were genuine and the movement was authentic.³⁸²

Fuentes genuinely sympathised with the Indians and, in the early days of the conflict, wrote in support of the dissidents' cause. But he could not endorse a movement born from violent struggle and, although the Zapatistas subsequently appeared to be taking a peaceful course, Fuentes distanced himself from the rebels. Provided the EZLN retained its arms, Fuentes would withhold support. Fuentes' relationship with Salinas was even more ambiguous: although not as close to Salinas as Paz, the president consulted Fuentes and publicly expressed some of his views. Fuentes undoubtedly perceived that he enjoyed some influence over Salinas. He had kept a diplomatic silence regarding the electoral fraud of 1988, and wrote in support of Salinas's economic policy. Yet Fuentes was strongly against the government reprisals in early January 1994, and on the eve of the election spoke in favour of the opposition. It

would take another government intervention in Chiapas to force Fuentes to clarify his position.

Post-script: The downfall of Salinas

If the Zapatista movement hadn't occurred, everything would have been different: the Zapatistas changed history. Carlos Monsiváis, 1995.³⁸³

Despite the events of 1994, Salinas remained popular; many Mexicans, including Paz and Fuentes, believed he had improved the economy. This image was swiftly shattered. Fittingly, the first whispers of a demise came from Heberto Castillo, the 1968 veteran and opposition candidate in 1988. In August 1994, Castillo pointed out financial irregularities between Salinas's brother, Raúl, and the Partido de Trabajadores.³⁸⁴ Charges against Raúl Salinas would subsequently include murder and involvement in drug trafficking.³⁸⁵ At the end of the year it was apparent that Salinas's economic policies had been far from sound and that the Mexican peso was artificially high. President Zedillo allowed it to float hoping it would drift to a more realistic value. It dropped sharply, however, and by mid-1995 had plummeted far below its levels during the crises of the 1980s. As Monsiváis explained, the effect was widespread: "Nothing can compare to this. The fall of the peso was [...] the most severe social earthquake I can remember." The United States stepped in to stem the flow leaving Zedillo with little option other than to continue Salinas's neoliberal economic policies: "I don't think he has much choice because of the foreign debt. It's pressing him all the time."³⁸⁶

Worse would follow for Salinas. By February 1995 he had become a figure of ridicule, and was portrayed as the cause of all the country's ills. Salinas's between-



meals hunger strike to protest his and his brother's innocence only served to enhance the derision. A survey showed that Mexicans wanted Salinas to stand trial for destroying the economy. After an "unprecedented, angry exchange" with Zedillo, Salinas was ordered to leave the country.³⁸⁷ Cartoonist Naranjo depicted Salinas's plight.³⁸⁸ Zedillo transgressed the unwritten rule of never attacking an outgoing president. Indeed, in a situation in which facts exceeded the bounds of the imagination, and the news became as compulsive viewing as the telenovelas, neither Salinas nor Zedillo obeyed the rules of convention.

Monsiváis held no illusions about President Salinas: "When he began to act in politics, I decided ... that he was not my cup of tea. He was terrible and now we are beginning to see that."³⁸⁹ In December 1993, Monsiváis had felt alone in his opposition to Salinas's policies; his solitude was over, but he denied any consequent increase in his own status as an intellectual: "It's not that my position is stronger, but I can speak freely because [...] I never supported Salinas. [...] I was on TV several times and attacked Salinas. So in my conscience I feel free [...] to make the criticism I want."³⁹⁰ The collapse of the peso and Salinas's fall from grace muted his former supporters: "They prefer to keep silent or to write as if they were never involved with Salinas."³⁹¹

Fuentes did not conform to this model. As can be seen from his comments about Salinas's economic policies, the fall of the peso took Fuentes completely by surprise; a post-script to *Nuevo tiempo mexicano* was hastily arranged.³⁹² Rather than condemning Salinas, or revising the remarks made in his favour, Fuentes explained that Salinas had postponed a devaluation until after the election to preserve the PRI. Salinas then prevaricated to protect his ambition to become president of the Organización Mundial

del Comercio. Fuentes claimed that Salinas's timing was at fault, not his policies: had he acted sooner the fluctuation in exchange rates would have been "ordenada y sin pánico" averting the economic chaos. Zedillo inherited a country without hope; Fuentes sustained that Zedillo's task was to create confidence by demonstrating his democratic will. He recommended specific cabinet changes and suggested that if Zedillo were to solve the assassinations of Colosio and Ruiz Massieu, he would gain popularity similar to that earned by Salinas when he imprisoned La Quina. Fuentes was cautiously optimistic: "Debemos recobrar la patria. Terminó la época de las ilusiones, la grandilocuencia y la soberbia. Llegó la hora del trabajo, de la modestia y del *alka seltzer* colectivo."³⁹³ Mexico had overcome similar difficulties in the past; Zedillo could lead the country towards true democracy.

On 9 February 1995, Zedillo unexpectedly announced that he had identified Marcos and ordered the arrest of Rafael Sebastián Guillén, a thirty-seven year old, middle-class mestizo from Tampico, Tamaulipas.³⁹⁴ It was claimed that the Zapatistas were poised to create widespread unrest throughout the Republic. In an effort, perhaps, to draw attention away from the economic disaster, and to appear decisive and strong, the Mexican government broke the cease-fire. There may be a more sinister reason: days earlier *Proceso* stated that the Chase Manhattan Bank had requested the elimination of the Zapatistas, adding that the Bank was one of the main creditors to Mexico's short-term debt.³⁹⁵ The timing of this announcement is crucial. Carlos Tello Díaz asserted that Marcos had been identified in December 1994.³⁹⁶ Had the government been waiting for an appropriate moment to act upon this information? Was Zedillo forced by his US economic sponsors to put Mexican lives at risk? Were the

campesino communities in Chiapas a price worth paying for bolstering the Mexican economy?

Zedillo's decision to re-deploy the Army caused Fuentes considerable consternation. If, through his work, he had hoped to persuade Zedillo to take democratic action, Fuentes had clearly been mistaken. Fuentes's reaction was "La cuestión chiapaneca", a tirade of rhetorical questions. Fuentes passionately voiced his fury, distaste and disgust at the needless slaughter of Mexican citizens. He stated that Zedillo had five possible options to counter the fall of the peso, those outlined in *Feliz nuevo año*: cabinet changes; solving the recent political assassinations; moving towards full democracy; maintaining the peace in Chiapas. Why, Fuentes demanded, did Zedillo take the fifth and worst of his alternatives: breaking the peace treaty:

¿Porque era lo más fácil para desvanecer la imagen de debilidad presidencial? ¿Corriendo el riesgo de aparecer más débil que nunca, prisionero del Ejército, de los halcones nacionales, de los tiburones internacionales y, aun, del Gobierno norteamericano? [...] ¿No sabía [Zedillo] que la mera presencia del Ejército en el perímetro de la tregua era suficiente para asegurar la contención del conflicto y darle tiempo y más tiempo, pero también más y más exigencia de imaginación política, a su solución?³⁹⁷

Fuentes was furious: he had seen it all before in 1968. Nearly thirty years after Tlatelolco, the Army was again attacking Mexican citizens. Fuentes questioned the government "proof" of the Zapatistas' intention to instigate widespread violence: "¿Alguien cree que los arsenales descubiertos en Veracruz y el Distrito Federal son, de ser del EZLN, una amenaza real para el gobierno?" He pointed out that the arms found amounted to no more than those held by "cualquier pequeño cacique pueblerino de México". This government strategy repeated that of 1968, when "evidence" that the

students were planning to attack the Army amounted to a handful of Molotov cocktails.³⁹⁸ Fuentes then scorned Zedillo's verification that "Marcos" was not from Chiapas and was thus a fraud:

¿Debía Simón Bolívar abandonar su condición de aristócrata venezolano para liberar a los esclavos de la mita peruana? ¿Debía Che Guevara abstenerse de luchar en Cuba porque era argentino? ¿Tenía algo que ver el Cura Hidalgo, lector de Rousseau, con las turbas iletradas de la Independencia mexicana?³⁹⁹

He stressed that intellectuals could endorse and become the spokesmen of causes into which they had not been born. Fuentes demanded answers: above all to the unfulfilled promise of giving social and political justice to the campesinos of Chiapas.

The response came, not from Zedillo, but the sub-director of *Vuelta*, Aurelio Asiain. As in Krauze's attack against Fuentes in 1988, the influence of Paz could be seen through Asiain's words.⁴⁰⁰ Again, Fuentes would not be drawn into the polemic; a former contributor to *Plural*, Tomás Segovia, took up his case. The argument evolved into a personal battle of words between Asiain and Segovia.⁴⁰¹ José Agustín viewed the debate as a continuation of the *Vuelta/ Nexos* wrangles of 1990 and 1992, and described the differences between the two groups as, "patéticas, nimias, puras cuestiones de ego".⁴⁰² If intellectuals were aware of the attention that Krauze, intentionally or otherwise, had taken away from the electoral fraud in 1988, some at least appeared to have learned a lesson. Carlos Montemayor refused to be drawn into the polemic, preferring to discuss the polarisation of the social forces in Chiapas.⁴⁰³ Sanjuana Martínez reported that in contrast to the Mexican intellectuals' lack of unity, their European counterparts had put their ideological differences to one side and called for an

end to the war in Chiapas. Spanish writer, José Manuel Medem, regretted that the battle between Paz and Fuentes impeded Mexican unity.⁴⁰⁴

Paz, himself, was in a difficult position: a staunch supporter of Salinas, he was closely tied to Zedillo. With neoliberalism in ruins, Paz remained true to his stated beliefs and supported the government intervention in Chiapas. He sent a letter, co-signed by sixty people, many of them Paz's colleagues, to the Mexican and Spanish press.⁴⁰⁵ *La Jornada* announced that this was the *Vuelta* reaction; a statement hotly refuted by Paz who claimed that the signatories were united only in their desire for peace.⁴⁰⁶ Blaming the Chiapas rebellion for all Mexico's current economic ills, Paz condemned the "violencia verbal de escritores y periodistas" for exacerbating the situation. Paz evidently believed writers should support the government. He explained, "no le pedimos a nadie que renuncie a la exposición pública de sus ideas. Pedimos que la discusión sea racional y civilizada." Paz voiced sympathy for the Indians of Chiapas. Presumably speaking figuratively, he declared, "compartimos el malestar de los más diversos grupos ante las condiciones de miseria e injusticia que han padecido". Indeed, Paz added that the Zapatistas' demands were justified, and suggested an amnesty for the EZLN leaders. Apparently forgetting that Zedillo had re-ignited the violence, he continued, "llamamos al EZLN a que deponga su actitud beligerante, se arriesgue por la paz y cambie la violencia armada por la acción política democrática".⁴⁰⁷

Despite his sixty supporters, Paz was again swimming against the tide. Elsa Guzmán Flores reflected the dismay with which she read Paz's document, stating that those who subscribed to it ignored the desperation of the chiapanecos that had forced them to turn to arms.⁴⁰⁸ As in January 1994, public outcry arrested further government

intervention in Chiapas: thousands gathered in the Zócalo, Mexico City, demanding reconciliation and democracy.⁴⁰⁹ Again intellectuals were at the forefront: Demetrio Sodi's "Manifiesto por la Paz en Chiapas", demanded an Army withdrawal from the region. It contained hundreds of signatures, including those of Poniatowska and Monsiváis.⁴¹⁰ Poniatowska voiced surprise and consternation that Zedillo had broken the dialogue process initiated one year earlier.⁴¹¹ Like Salinas, Zedillo was forced to recall the troops.

If Zedillo hoped to destroy the EZLN by unmasking its popular spokesman, he was mistaken. Guillén had not been a public figure in his previous incarnation, nor had he committed any crimes or indiscretions. The myth of Marcos proved to be stronger than the man; as shown at the CND, his supporters neither wanted nor needed to know his identity. Monsiváis explained: "Have you heard anyone speak about Rafael Guillén? Anyone talking about Chiapas says 'Marcos'. Marcos is a different person from Guillén. [...] When Rafael Guillén became Marcos he changed, he developed intelligence, ability, media charisma and talent."⁴¹² Monsiváis stressed the dual power of the mask: it allowed Guillén to develop a separate personality and enabled many Mexicans to relate to the Zapatista movement.⁴¹³ In Superbarrio, the Republic already possessed one anonymous campaigning champion and Mexicans willingly welcomed another into the fold. Marcos could be all things to all people: a synthesis of the mystical figures in Mexican history. It was little wonder that the public preferred him to retain his balaclava.

Despite a second victory for civil society in ending the government force in Chiapas, Monsiváis was nonetheless uncertain about the future role of public protest;

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Zedillo merely paid lip-service to intellectuals: "He can't conceive of a civil society. It's too much for him; he just believes in authority, economic orthodoxy and neoliberalism. [...] He's not a reader; he's certainly not a thinker; his group is essentially [...] orthodox economists."⁴¹⁴ Efrén substantiated this point.⁴¹⁵ Monsiváis nonetheless saw a role for intellectuals:

I've never experienced so open an atmosphere in Mexico. [...] 60 or 70% of intellectuals supported Salinas's government, now there are none. They certainly do not support Zedillo. [...] The crash of the peso helped to diminish expectations of the government and abolished the illusion of a true presidency. Now we have a new situation and intellectuals are part of the effort to build democracy or the democratic transition.⁴¹⁶

As Camp maintained, "whether or not Mexico's leadership is truly committed to democratic reform, [...] many forces within and outside Mexico are pushing it in the direction of greater democracy with all that entails".⁴¹⁷ The structure of the "perfect dictatorship" had weakened: Mexico's economic crisis and Salinas's fall from glory created a new ambience in which political change could flourish; giving intellectuals, writers and civil society the opportunity to shape a more democratic future.

Notes to chapter six

¹ Monsiváis, "Cadena de promesas", p.39.

² Roger Bartra, "Nacionalismo, democracia y socialismo: invitación a la polémica", *La Jornada Semanal*, No.84, 20 Jan. 1991, p.39.

³ Armando Ponce, "La implacable crítica de Monsiváis en defensa de una sociedad 'sacrificada'", *Proceso*, No.1123, 10 May 1998, p.16.

⁴ Russell, *Mexico Under Salinas*, p.11.

⁵ Stephen Morris, *Political Reformism in Mexico: An Overview of Contemporary Mexican Politics*, (London. 1995), pp.91, 93, 99, 101; Carr, "Mexico: the Perils of Unity", in Carr and Ellner, (eds.), *The Latin American Left*, p.96.

⁶ Camp, *Politics in Mexico*, p.217.

⁷ Russell, *Mexico Under Salinas*, p.275.

⁸ Handelman, *Mexican Politics*, p.72.

⁹ Monsiváis, "La confianza", p.18.

¹⁰ Neil Harvey, "The Limits of Concertation in Rural Mexico", in Harvey, (ed.), *Mexico: The Dilemmas of Transition*, p.200.

¹¹ Paul Haber, "The Art and Implications of Political Restructuring", in María Lorena Cook, Kevin J. Middlebrook, and Juan Molinar Horcasitas, (eds.), *The Politics of Economic Restructuring*, (San Diego, 1994), p.290.

¹² Camp, *Politics in Mexico*, pp.185, 24.

¹³ *Business Week* quoted in Russell, *Mexico Under Salinas*, p.190.

¹⁴ Tim Padgett, "Don Porfirio's Revenge", *Newsweek*, Vol.CXX, No.14, 5 Oct. 1992, p.28.

¹⁵ Luis Pazos, *El Norte*, 7 Nov. 1989, p.4, quoted in Russell, *Mexico Under Salinas*, p.190.

¹⁶ [N.A.], "Nexos con la opinión pública", *Nexos*, No.170, Feb. 1992, pp.83-85. A survey of 3,500 people in six Mexican cities representing 67% of the nation's urban population, found that 75.5% believed Mexico to be changing for the better, with 10.5% against. 34.8% stated that Mexico was in a better situation than in the previous year, and 23.2% against. 36% claimed that their personal situation had improved, 18.5% that it had worsened, and 44.9% reported no change. Significantly, 48.3% of those asked believed that their circumstances would improve in the coming year, 13.8% that they would not, 18.9% did not know. To the question of which political party was best equipped to solve Mexico's problems, 42.1% replied the PRI; 8.6% the PAN; 9.4% the PRD; 19.2% said none of them. In October 1990, 65.7% of those polled agreed with Salinas's form of governing (26.8% against). In January 1992, the figure had risen to 80%, with 15% against.

¹⁷ Armando Ponce, "Artistas e intelectuales de diversas corrientes en torno al programa de Salinas", *Proceso*, No.625, 24 Oct. 1988, p.46.

¹⁸ Armando Ponce, "Por que los anti-priistas aceptaron la invitación", *Proceso*, No.625, 24 Oct. 1988, p.48.

¹⁹ Brewster, Interview with Monsiváis, 1996.

²⁰ Miguel Angel Quemain, "Entrevista a Octavio Paz: 75 años de poesía", *La Jornada Semanal*, No.239, 16 April 1989, p.3.

²¹ Anne Marie Mergier, "Empezando por el PRI, todos los partidos en México deben democratizarse, dice Octavio Paz", *Proceso*, No.660, 26 June 1989, p.25.

²² Castañeda, *Utopia Unarmed*, p.196.

²³ Arturo García Hernández, "Renuncia Octavio Paz al FNCA; acusa al Consejo de burocratismo y parcialidad", *La Jornada*, No.2662, 9 Feb. 1992, p.37.

²⁴ Octavio Paz, "Cartas sobre la mesa", *Letras libres*, No.1, Jan. 1999, p.8. In a letter to Enrique Krauze, dated 16 August 1991, Paz explained that he declined the position, whereupon Salinas suggested Spain. Paz did not give his reason for refusing the posts.

²⁵ Robert A. Pastor, "Post-Revolutionary Mexico: The Salinas Opening", *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs*, Vol.32, No.3, Fall 1990, p.14.

²⁶ Gilberto Guevara Niebla, "Volver al 68", *Nexos*, No.190, Oct. 1993, p.43. On his release, Guevara Niebla lived in Chile and France.

²⁷ Sonia Morales, "Incluir a Salinas en los libros de texto fue una imprudencia; lo del Ejército en el 68, evidencia histórica: Guevara Niebla", *Proceso*, No.963, 17 April 1995, pp.40-41. Guevara Niebla had been Under-Secretary of Basic Education (working for Ernesto Zedillo Ponce de León who kept the

Student Movement out of the history books). His acceptance of a government post was seen by many of the Left to be a betrayal.

²⁸ Robles, "Krauze equipará el trato a Paz", p.48.

²⁹ Ignacio Ramírez, "Octavio Paz: La planeación del Coloquio de Invierno, un golpe bajo de Flores Olea, Aguilar Camín y otros", *Proceso*, No.797, 10 Feb. 1992, p.51.

³⁰ Paz quoted in Camp, "Intellectuals: Agents of Change?", p.307; Juan José Hinojosa, "Clubes de intelectuales", *Proceso*, No.800, 2 March 1992, p.36. Juan José Hinojosa underlined the intellectuals' unwritten rules, and the closed, elitist nature of their world.

³¹ [N.A.], "Censuran intelectuales y políticos a Paz y compañía", *Unomásuno*, No.4611, 1 Sept. 1990, p.1.

³² Armando Ponce y Gerardo Ochoa Sandy, "Vuelta inicia su encuentro de la libertad: Fidel Castro no haría algo así: Krauze", *Proceso*, No.721, 27 Aug. 1990, pp.56-57.

³³ Eduardo Cervantes Díaz Lombardo, "De libertades y parcialidades", *Unomásuno*, No.4611, 1 Sept. 1990, p.6.

³⁴ Enrique Maza, "Octavio Paz dictó cátedra ante cincuenta intelectuales del mundo", *Proceso*, No.722, 3 Sept. 1990, pp.50-51. As discussed in chapter one, Monsiváis refused an intellectual label.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p.51; Alejandra Leal y Alegría Martínez, "El socialismo apenas se construye: Rodríguez Araujo", *Unomásuno*, No.4610, 31 Aug. 1990, p.22. Leal and Martínez stated that both Monsiváis and Córdova were publicly humiliated at the conference.

³⁶ Froylán M. López Narváez, "Vuelta y vuelta", *Proceso*, No.722, 3 Sept. 1990, p.23; Carlos Monsiváis, "Una réplica pospuesta (y aumentada)" *La Jornada*, No.2143, 30 Aug. 1990, pp.1, 6.

³⁷ Jorge Luis Espinosa y Fermín Ramírez, "México es la dictadura perfecta: Mario Vargas Llosa", *Unomásuno*, No.4610, 31 Aug. 1990, p.22; [N.A.], "Abandonó el país Vargas Llosa; falso, el rumor de presiones: Paz", *Unomásuno*, No.4612, 2 Sept. 1990, pp.1, 23; Armando Ponce y Gerardo Ochoa Sandy, "Detrás de 'los asuntos familiares' de Vargas Llosa: su pleito con Octavio Paz", *Proceso*, No.723, 10 Sept. 1990, pp.50-55. In May 1992 Vargas Llosa stood by his comments. See, Mario Vargas Llosa, *Desafíos a la libertad*, (Madrid, 1994), pp.121-126.

³⁸ [N.A.], "México es la dictadura perfecta", p.1.

³⁹ Roberto Zamarripa, "Paz ejerce un dogmatismo primitivo: Martínez Verdugo", *La Jornada*, No.2143, 30 Aug. 1990, p.5; Alejandra Leal, "El entreguismo de Paz a Televisa y su traición a la generación del 68 le restan autoridad: Muria", *Unomásuno*, No.4611, 1 Sept. 1990, p.23; Maza, "Octavio Paz dictó cátedra", p.44. Leal also accused Paz of having betrayed the 1968 generation. Maza confirmed that Paz always had the last word in the discussions.

⁴⁰ Elena Poniatowska, "Los años que vuelan", *La Jornada*, No.3433, 31 March 1994, Suplemento, p.ix; Elena Poniatowska, *Las palabras del árbol*, (México D.F., 1998), p.49.

⁴¹ Arturo García Hernández y Pablo Espinosa, "Sin Vargas Llosa, las conclusiones del Encuentro *Vuelta* por Canal 2", *La Jornada*, No.2146, 2 Sept. 1990, p.38.

⁴² Armando Ponce y Gerardo Ochoa Sandy, "En las afueras del encuentro: acciones y reacciones, expectación, polémicas, denuestos", *Proceso*, No.722, 3 Sept. 1990, p.47.

⁴³ Maza, "Octavio Paz dictó cátedra", pp.44, 53.

⁴⁴ Fernando del Paso, "Contestación a Octavio Paz", *Proceso*, No.752, 1 April 1991, p.47.

⁴⁵ [N.A.], "El capitalismo es responsable de la miseria en que viven muchas naciones: Jesús Ortega", *Unomásuno*, No.4610, 31 Aug. 1990, p.6; Eduardo Cervantes Díaz Lombardo, "De libertades y parcialidades", *Unomásuno*, No.4611, 1 Sept. 1990, p.6. Díaz Lombardo drew attention to the significant political implications of the conference.

⁴⁶ Néstor de Buen, "Los intelectuales y la TV", *La Jornada*, No.2146, 2 Sept. 1990, p.7.

⁴⁷ Their differences were more evident in global affairs; their opposite stances over Nicaragua, for example, were perhaps a "safe", less confrontational battleground. As shown after the 1988 presidential election, some commentators felt more comfortable using examples from overseas.

⁴⁸ Ignacio Ramírez, "No se le debió invitar tarde a Paz, pero a todos modos creo que no hubiera aceptado: Fernando del Paso", *Proceso*, No.799, 24 Feb. 1992, p.55. Del Paso stated that both Paz and Fuentes deserved the Nobel Prize, but it was inconceivable that it would be awarded to two Mexicans in quick succession.

⁴⁹ Paz's relationship with the Chilean poet, Nobel Prize winner, Pablo Neruda substantiates this view. In the 1940s, Neruda refused to submit work to Paz's *Laurel* magazine; according to Paz this was due to rivalry, envy and struggles of interests and power. Relations worsened when Paz printed a poem in *Taller* criticising one of Neruda's friends and dedicated others to one of his enemies. The two came to physical blows following remarks made by Neruda to Paz questioning the purity of the latter's conscience. They were never reconciled. See, Gerardo Ochoa Sandy, "Cuando los intelectuales llegan a

las manos: Los pleitos a bofetadas de Neruda-Paz, Novo-Usigli, Arreola-Rulfo, Cuevas-Icaza y García Márquez-Vargas Llosa", *Proceso*, No.843, 28 Dec. 1992, pp.48-51.

Conversely, Paz often disagreed with Monsiváis, but never provoked a permanent rupture. Their polemic of 1977-78 did not degenerate into the highly personal insults that would be witnessed between Paz and Fuentes. Paz and Monsiváis were not direct rivals, they operated in different cultural fields; Monsiváis neither enjoyed nor desired close ties with those in power. See, Monsiváis, "Respuesta a Octavio Paz", pp.39-41; Paz, "Aclaraciones y reiteraciones", pp.29-31; Monsiváis, "Rectificaciones y relecturas", pp.31-34; Paz, "Repaso y despedida", pp.31-33; Monsiváis, "Recapitulación y conclusiones", pp.31-32. Xavier Rodríguez Ledesma stated that this polemic, "acaparó la atención del ámbito intelectual del país e incluso traspasó nuestras fronteras"; he warned, "ilustra la manera en que [Paz] se debate al ver cuestionada su posición ideológica. Sus respuestas, por lo general, muestran un escaso nivel de tolerancia hacia sus oponentes." Moreover, Rodríguez Ledesma connected it to the 1990 *Vuelta* conference, stating that one session was a continuation of the discussion of twelve years earlier. In 1978 Monsiváis had had the last word; Paz would end its sequel. See, Rodríguez Ledesma, *El pensamiento político*, pp.198, 205, 256.

⁵⁰ Angélica Abelleira, "El Nobel no es pasaporte a la inmortalidad: Paz", *La Jornada*, No.2185, 12 Oct. 1990, p.4.

⁵¹ Ignacio Ramírez, "Octavio Paz acusa de unilateral al Coloquio de Invierno y no asistirá", *Proceso*, No.796, 3 Feb. 1992, p.50.

⁵² Armando Ponce, "Krauze impugnó a Fuentes, y Fuentes y Paz rompieron su larga amistad", *Proceso*, No.798, 17 Feb. 1992, p.51.

⁵³ Gerardo Ochoa Sandy, "La directora del Fondo Nacional Para La Cultura y Las Artes: La renuncia de Paz, una gran pérdida; su opinión para el otorgamiento de becas siempre fue especialmente respetada", *Proceso*, No.798, 17 Feb. 1992, pp.50-51.

⁵⁴ Elena Gallegos y Arturo García, "Sale Flores Olea del CNCA; al relevo, Rafael Tovar y de Teresa", *La Jornada*, No.2710, 28 March 1992, p.3.

⁵⁵ Ochoa Sandy, "La directora del Fondo", p.51.

⁵⁶ Ramírez, "Octavio Paz acusa de unilateral", p.50.

⁵⁷ Arturo García Hernández, "Coloquio de Invierno, un concilio al que no me invitaron por hereje: Krauze", *La Jornada*, No.2663, 10 Feb. 1992, p.39.

⁵⁸ Angélica Abelleira, "Y el Coloquio de Invierno se volvió a poner caliente", *La Jornada*, No.2668, 15 Feb. 1992, p.41.

⁵⁹ Octavio Paz, "La renuncia de Paz", *Proceso*, No.797, 10 Feb. 1992, p.51. The letter was dated 7 February 1992.

⁶⁰ Ignacio Ramírez, "En los medios, control de monopolios y familias: Carlos Fuentes", *Proceso*, No.798, 17 Feb. 1992, p.49.

⁶¹ Octavio Paz, "Coloquio o cuento de invierno", *Vuelta*, No.184, March 1992, pp.70-71.

⁶² Octavio Paz, "La conjura de los letrados", *Vuelta*, No.185, April 1992, pp.9-10.

⁶³ Silvina M. Espinosa de los Monteros, "Creación versus poder: ¿Pugna entre intelectuales?", *La Cultura en México*, No.2159, 2 Nov. 1994, p.49.

⁶⁴ Efrén, [N.T.], *Proceso*, No.843, 28 Dec. 1992, p.48.

⁶⁵ Castañeda, *Utopia Unarmed*, p.197.

⁶⁶ Gagnon, "The Role of Intellectuals", p.6.

⁶⁷ Foucault, 1984, in Rabinow (ed.), *The Foucault Reader*, pp.382-383.

⁶⁸ Héctor Rivera, "Cómo se han enfrentado Paz y Fuentes a sus adversarios", *Proceso*, No.798, 17 Feb. 1992, p.52.

⁶⁹ Carlos Monsiváis, "El pragmatismo del régimen, por encima de los proyectos culturales", *Proceso*, No.805, 6 April 1992, p.48.

⁷⁰ José Agustín, "Cuarenta años de cultura mexicana", *La Cultura en México*, No.2088, 30 June 1993, p.66.

⁷¹ Angélica Abelleira, Pablo Espinosa y Ana María González, "En lo esencial, no modificaré la política del Estado frente a la cultura", *La Jornada*, No.2711, 29 March 1992, pp.32-33.

⁷² Alberto Ruy Sánchez, "Todos somos caníbales", *La Jornada*, No.2670, 17 Feb. 1992, p.40.

⁷³ Armando Ponce, "Los embates de Octavio Paz y de *Vuelta* precipitaron la salida de Víctor Flores Olea", *Proceso*, No.804, 30 March 1992, pp.48, 50-51; Octavio Paz, "Nunca pedí la destitución de Flores Olea", *La Jornada*, No.2711, 29 March 1992, pp.1, 2; Efrén, [N.T.], *Proceso*, No.804, 30 March 1992, p.48.

⁷⁴ Flores Olea's strongly voiced version of the incident can be read in Toledo y Jiménez Trejo, *Creación y poder*, pp.92-94.

- ⁷⁵ Carlos Puig, "Carlos Fuentes en Washington: Terrorismo derechista de dueños de Yates y canales de televisión; hablan por ellos 'marionetas intelectuales'", *Proceso*, No.807, 20 April 1992, pp.48-49.
- ⁷⁶ Paz, "La conjura", p.9.
- ⁷⁷ Abelleyra, Espinosa y González, "En lo esencial", pp.32-33.
- ⁷⁸ Hinojosa, "Clubes de intelectuales", p.37.
- ⁷⁹ Gerardo Ochoa Sandy, "Coloquio: Las relaciones de los intelectuales con el poder", *Proceso*, No.799, 24 Feb. 1992, p.53.
- ⁸⁰ Carlos Monsiváis, "El pragmatismo del régimen, por encima de los proyectos culturales", *Proceso*, No.805, 6 April 1992, p.48.
- ⁸¹ Sabour, "Between Patronage and Autonomy", p.18.
- ⁸² Luis González de Alba, "1968: La fiesta y la tragedia", *Nexos*, No.189, Sept. 1993, p.24.
- ⁸³ Many authors, "A 25 años del 68", *Proceso*, No.874, 2 Aug. 1993, p.64.
- ⁸⁴ It bears the names of those known to have died there and a section of Rosario Castellanos's poem, written especially for *La noche de Tlatelolco*. See, Poniatowska, *La noche*, p.8.
- ⁸⁵ Alberto Aguirre M., "En las marchas conmemorativas del 68, exigen fincar responsabilidades", *Proceso*, No.884, 11 Oct. 1993, p.15.
- ⁸⁶ Carlos Monsiváis, "Mitificación y desmitificación y nueva mitificación del 68", *Proceso*, No.873, 26 July 1993, p.36.
- ⁸⁷ Sonia Morales, Manuel Robles y Rodrigo Vera, "Protagonistas del 68: Echeverría, responsable; debe comparecer ante la Comisión de la Verdad", *Proceso*, No.884, 11 Oct. 1993, pp.8-11.
- ⁸⁸ Mireya Cuéllar, "Facilitará Estados Unidos información acerca del 68", *La Jornada*, No.3257, 3 Oct. 1993, p.3.
- ⁸⁹ Cuéllar, "Facilitará Estados Unidos información", p.3.
- ⁹⁰ Georgina Saldierna, "Monsiváis: en el 68, peculiar versión de la pena de muerte", *La Jornada*, No.3256, 2 Oct. 1993, p.9.
- ⁹¹ To some extent this happened before the re-writing of history. In January 1995, I observed a school visit to Tlatelolco. Not only did the teacher indicate the remains of the "three cultures", but also the impressions of the bullets on the concrete slabs that remain as a silent testimony to the events of 2 October 1968. The children were then shown the sixteenth century church doors that remained closed despite the students' cries for shelter, and finally the commemorative plaque.
- ⁹² In October 1998, 3,000 boxes of papers were duly released. The Archivo de Investigaciones Sociales y Políticas at the Archivo General de la Nación, Gallery 2, is a room full of documents concerning twentieth-century internal national security investigations, including many from 1968. In September 1999 these could be consulted: a daunting task since the thousands of boxes are not yet catalogued, nor are the records in chronological order.
- ⁹³ Manuel Robles y Rodrigo Vera, "Ocurencias, contradicciones y mentiras, los recursos del gobierno para cerrar archivos del 68", *Proceso*, No.896, 3 Jan. 1994, p.6.
- ⁹⁴ Sonia Morales, "Informes de 37 dependencias de la UNAM: Los soldados se llevaron muebles, equipos y hasta dinero en efectivo", *Proceso*, No.884, 11 Oct. 1993, pp.12-13. Access to the 1968 files in the Archivo de la Defensa Nacional, if they exist, was not possible in 1998 and 1999. Personal files of members of the armed forces show a remarkable lack of activity between 1966 and 1970.
- ⁹⁵ Enrique Krauze, "Los intelectuales y el Estado: la engañosa fascinación del poder", *Proceso*, No.1005, 5 Feb. 1996, p.27.
- ⁹⁶ Brewster, Interview with Monsiváis, 1995.
- ⁹⁷ Jordy Micheli, "Adhesión con el editorial de *La Jornada*", *La Jornada*, No.3433, 31 March 1994, p.2.
- ⁹⁸ Paul B. Carroll, "Mexico Stocks Tumble on Fighting in Chiapas", *Wall Street Journal*, 4 Jan. 1994, Sec.C, p.1; Craig Torres, "Share Prices Plunge 6.3% in Mexico: Investors are Shaken by Unrest in Chiapas and the Nation's Capital", *Wall Street Journal*, 11 Jan. 1994, Sec.C, p.1. The uprising provoked a 3.4% drop in the Mexican stock market. By 10 January it had fallen 6.3%.
- ⁹⁹ Roger Burbach, "Roots of the Postmodern Rebellion in Chiapas", *New Left Review*, (1994), pp.122-123.
- ¹⁰⁰ Dionicio Morales, "Juan Bañuelos: La poesía no está en crisis, los que entran en crisis son los poetas", *La Cultura en México*, No.1871, 10 May 1989, p.38.
- ¹⁰¹ For a discussion of the methods adopted by the people of Chiapas see, Claire Brewster, "Una guerra de palabras": *The intellectual response to the rebellion in Chiapas, Mexico, January-August 1994*, M.A. thesis, 1995, pp.9-39; Burbach, "Roots of the Postmodern Rebellion", pp.122-123.
- ¹⁰² Fernando Orgambides, "Entregaré el poder a quien gane, sea del partido que sea", *El País*, No.6298, 31 July 1994, p.6.

- ¹⁰³ Guillermo Correa, "Infantería, tanquetas, helicópteros y paracaidistas en los combates de Ocosingo", *Proceso*, No.866, 7 June 1993, pp.18-21; Vicente Leñero, "La espera, la declaración, las sombras, las luces y el mito general", *Proceso*, No.922, 21 Feb. 1994, p.7.
- ¹⁰⁴ Subcomandante Insurgente Marcos, "Chiapas: el Sureste en dos vientos", *EZLN documentos y comunicados, 1 de enero/ 8 de agosto de 1994*, (México D.F., 1994), p.49.
- ¹⁰⁵ Camp, *Politics in Mexico*, pp.130, 144.
- ¹⁰⁶ Luis Pazos, "La cosecha de Chiapas", *El Financiero*, No.3222, 15 Jan. 1994, p.7. As stated in chapter two, Pazos claimed that in 1968 the students were used as cannon fodder; in 1994 it was the Indians' turn.
- ¹⁰⁷ Tim Padgett, "The Rage of the Zapatistas", *Newsweek*, 17 Jan. 1994, p.32.
- ¹⁰⁸ Michael Serrill, "Zapata's Revenge", *Time Magazine*, 17 Jan. 1994, p.22.
- ¹⁰⁹ Fernando Orgambides, "Falsa captura del jefe rebelde", *El País*, No.6096, 8 Jan. 1994, p.3; Rodolfo Reyes, "Surgen las fans de Marcos", *El Financiero*, No.3221, 14 Jan. 1994, p.35. This was the first of many arrests. In the first two weeks of hostilities, four Marcos "look alikes" were detained, one of them a Catholic priest.
- ¹¹⁰ *Excelsior*, No.27944, 11 Jan. 1994, p.35. The profile of the square-faced, bushy-haired Rojas bore no resemblance to that of Subcomandante Marcos.
- ¹¹¹ See for example, Elena Poniatowska, Carlos Fuentes, José Emilio Pacheco, y Jorge Castañeda, "Sí se bombardea indiscriminadamente en Chiapas", *La Jornada*, No.3351, 8 Jan. 1994, p.2; Adolfo Pérez Esquivel, "Peticiones al presidente Salinas", *La Jornada*, No.3351, 8 Jan. 1994, p.2; Julieta Campos, "Adhesión a las propuestas de cese al fuego en Chiapas", *La Jornada*, No.3351, 8 Jan. 1994, p.2; Many authors, "Mujeres en contra de la violencia", *La Jornada*, No.3352, 9 Jan. 1994, p.2; Leticia Burgos Ochoa, "El partido de la revolución democrática en Guerrero ante los acontecimientos en Chiapas", *La Jornada*, No.3353, 10 Jan. 1994, p.45.
- ¹¹² Fernando Orgambides, "Intelectuales y artistas españoles piden respeto a los derechos humanos", *El País*, No. 6100, 12 Jan. 1994, p.8.
- ¹¹³ Juan Bañuelos, Carlos Jurado, Elva Macías, Oscar Olivia, Carlos Olmos y Eraclio Zepeda, "La inteligencia debe restaurar la paz: cinco premios de Chiapas", *La Jornada*, No.3346, 3 Jan. 1994, pp.1-2.
- ¹¹⁴ José Gil Olmos, "Manifestación de diez mil personas en el Zócalo", *La Jornada*, No.3351, 8 Jan. 1994, p.15.
- ¹¹⁵ Craig Torres, "Mexico's Bolsa Rebounds on Signs of Possible Dialogue with Rebels", *Wall Street Journal*, 12 Jan. 1994, Sec.C, p.1. The fluctuations of January 1994 are insignificant compared to the free-falls of December 1994 and early 1995.
- ¹¹⁶ Efrén, "Desde algún lugar de la selva", *Proceso*, No.902, 14 Feb. 1994, p.49.
- ¹¹⁷ The communiques were sent to *La Jornada*, *El Financiero*, and the local daily *El Tiempo de Chiapas*. *Proceso* was also praised by the Zapatistas for its unbiased reporting. Riva Palacio reported that threats were made to *La Jornada* and it was accused of being a mouthpiece for the EZLN. He claimed such charges were against the freedom of expression and the right of information and called for Salinas to take a strong line against the perpetrators. See, Raymundo Riva Palacio, "No a las amenazas", *El Financiero*, No.3240, 2 Feb. 1994, p.41.
- ¹¹⁸ Subcomandante Marcos, "¿De qué nos van a perdonar?", *EZLN documentos y comunicados*, (México D.F., 1994), pp.89-90. It is dated 21 January 1994. For an analysis of other communiques see, Brewster, "Una guerra de palabras", pp.45-61.
- ¹¹⁹ Marcos, "¿De qué nos van a perdonar?", *EZLN documentos*, p.90.
- ¹²⁰ Enrique Krauze, "El milagro del mestizaje", *El País*, No.6149, 3 March 1994, pp.13-14. As discussed below, Paz, Fuentes, Poniatowska and Monsiváis were all moved by Marcos's powerful defence.
- ¹²¹ Amelia Pérez Lamar, "20 Compromisos Por La Democracia", *Proceso*, No.898, 17 Jan. 1994, pp.78-79.
- ¹²² Demetrio Sodi de la Tijera, "Ya aceptaron los 20 compromisos", *La Jornada*, No.3378, 4 Feb. 1994, p.11.
- ¹²³ Damian Fraser, "Chiapas's Gentle Military Strategist", *Financial Times*, 9 Feb. 1994, p.3. An opinion poll conducted in February 1994 found that 61% of those asked sympathised with the EZLN.
- ¹²⁴ Subcomandante Insurgente Marcos, "Los arroyos cuando bajan", *La Jornada*, No.3493, 31 May 1994, p.8.
- ¹²⁵ Woollen balaclavas, masked dolls with wooden rifles, 'Marcos' T-shirts, photographs, videos, and condoms (called el levantamiento) continue to provide an income for many street vendors.
- ¹²⁶ Fernando Orgambides, "Fuerza enmascarada", *El País*, No.6145, 27 Feb. 1994, p.15.
- ¹²⁷ Porfirio Muñoz Ledo, [N.T.], *Proceso*, No.916, 23 May 1994, p.9.

- ¹²⁸ Régis Debry, quoted by Juan Pellicer, "La gravedad y la gracia: El discurso de Subcomandante Marcos", Simposio nórdico sobre la identidad latinoamericana y española, Universidad de Lund, Suecia, 4-6 May 1995.
- ¹²⁹ Brewster, Interview with Monsiváis, 1996.
- ¹³⁰ Elena Poniatowska, "Marcos: quieren desaparecer a los indígenas; los creen un lastre", *La Jornada*, No.3556, 2 Aug. 1994, p.17.
- ¹³¹ James Scott, "Hegemony and the Peasantry", *Politics and Society*, Vol.7, No.3, 1977, pp.268, 294.
- ¹³² Gramsci, quoted in Radhakrishnan, "Toward an Effective Intellectual", pp.90, 72.
- ¹³³ Tim Padgett, "The man behind the mask", *Newsweek*, Vol. CXXV, No.8, 20 Feb. 1995, p.36.
- ¹³⁴ [N.A.], "Declina Julio Scherer García ser mediador para un eventual diálogo en Chiapas", *Proceso*, No.897, 10 Jan. 1994, p.54.
- ¹³⁵ Annette Fradera, Ma. Carmen de Lara, Leopoldo Best, Diego Jauregui, Laura Sosa, Carmen Giménez Cacho, Guillermo Briseño, Hebe Rosell, Adriana Olivera, Ma. Sol Márquez, Betsy Pecanins, Alfonso Morales, Braulio Peralta, Jesusa Rodríguez, Eugenia León, Antonio Helguera, "Proponen a Elena Poniatowska y Antonio García León como mediadores en Chiapas", *La Jornada*, No.3362, 19 Jan. 1994, p.2. Poniatowska refused, using the excuse that she is not a Mexican by birth.
- ¹³⁶ Rosario Ibarra de Piedra, "Rosario Ibarra dispuesta a contribuir en la solución del conflicto chiapaneco", *La Jornada*, No.3358, 15 Jan. 1994, p.2. Ibarra explained that she received a letter from the EZLN proposing her participation in a mediation commission. Unsure of its authenticity, Ibarra wanted to assure the Zapatistas that her silence did not indicate a rejection. She continued that her unconditional defence of human rights and her democratic conviction meant that she would do her best to achieve a dignified, just and lasting solution to the problems.
- ¹³⁷ Salvador Rico, "Contribuir a que haya serenidad, deber de los intelectuales: Paz", *El Financiero*, No.3221, 14 Jan. 1994, p.33.
- ¹³⁸ Handelman, *Mexican Politics*, pp.2-3. As discussed below, even Salinas's family would not be above suspicion.
- ¹³⁹ This stance is not surprising; the two were rivals. In 1993 Camacho had been overlooked in favour of Colosio as presidential candidate and, after the latter's assassination, Camacho was again rejected in preference for Zedillo.
- ¹⁴⁰ Subcomandante Marcos, "Segunda Declaración de la Selva Lacandona", *EZLN comunicados*, p.273, 276.
- ¹⁴¹ Camp, *Politics in Mexico*, p.144.
- ¹⁴² Jorge G. Castañeda, *Sorpresas te da la vida, México, 1994*. (México D.F., 1994), pp.77-78; Gerardo Albarrán de Alba, "La crisis de credibilidad envuelve las elecciones; alto riesgo que el país se torne ingobernable", *Proceso*, No.920, 20 June 1994, p.10.
- ¹⁴³ Demetrio Sodi de la Tijera, "El Grupo San Angel", *La Jornada*, No.3531, 8 July 1994, p.7.
- ¹⁴⁴ Víctor Ballinas y Juan Manuel Venegas, "Elección creíble, gane quien gane, objetivo del grupo de intelectuales", *La Jornada*, No.3514, 21 June 1994, p.8.
- ¹⁴⁵ Joel Ortega, "Caleidoscopio", *La Jornada*, No.3533, 10 July 1994, p.13.
- ¹⁴⁶ Sanjuana Martínez "'Sin la rebelión Zapatista, el país seguiría dormido': Carlos Fuentes", *Proceso*, No.926, 1 Aug. 1994, p.20.
- ¹⁴⁷ Gerardo Albarrán de Alba, Pascual Beltrán de Río y Antonio Jáquez, "El Grupo San Angel: paralela electoral de lujo, con bendición y presencia de Salinas", *Proceso*, No.925, 25 July 1994, pp.9, 14.
- ¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p.10, 11, 14.
- ¹⁴⁹ Mireya Cuéllar y Juan Manuel Venegas, "Lluvia de elogios para Diego en la reunión del Grupo San Angel", *La Jornada*, No.3523, 30 June 1994, p.10.
- ¹⁵⁰ Superbarrio y El Grupo Sin Angel, "México para todos", *La Jornada*, No.3783, 21 March 1995, p.51.
- ¹⁵¹ Brewster, Interview with Poniatowska.
- ¹⁵² Brewster, Interview with Monsiváis, 1995.
- ¹⁵³ Paz quoted in Camp, "Intellectuals: Agents of Change?", p.307; Juan José Hinojosa, "Clubes de intelectuales", *Proceso*, No.800, 2 March 1992, p.36. Hinojosa underlined the intellectuals' unwritten rules; and the closed, elitist nature of their world.
- ¹⁵⁴ Brewster, Interview with Velázquez Alba.
- ¹⁵⁵ [N.A.], "Octavio Paz, Mario Vargas Llosa, dos testigos de nuestro tiempo", *La Nación*, 26 May 1985, p.2.
- ¹⁵⁶ [N.A.], "Octavio Paz Looks To His Old Friend Eros", *New York Times*, No. 49724, 11 June 1994, p.16.
- ¹⁵⁷ Paz, *Posdata*, p.73.
- ¹⁵⁸ Scherer, "En vísperas de sus ochenta años", p.15.

- ¹⁵⁹ Octavio Paz, "El nudo de Chiapas", *La Jornada*, No.3348, 5 Jan. 1994, p.14.
- ¹⁶⁰ Octavio Paz, "El plagio, la plaga y la llaga", *Plural*, No.36, Sept. 1974, p.89.
- ¹⁶¹ EZLN, *Documentos*, pp.55-56; Poniatowska, "Sí sólo fuera", p.18. Marcos explained that Salinas opened the hospital in Guadalupe Tepeyac in September 1993. Although the hospital was fully equipped and staffed for its inauguration, when the press left, "se llevaron todo".
- ¹⁶² Neil Harvey, "The New Agrarian Movement in Mexico 1979-1990", *Institute of Latin American Studies*, 1990, pp.34-35.
- ¹⁶³ Paz, "El nudo de Chiapas", p.14.
- ¹⁶⁴ Octavio Paz, "La autohumillación de los incrédulos", *La Cultura en México*, No.484, 19 May 1971, p.iv.
- ¹⁶⁵ Elena Gallegos y Emilio Lomas, "Seguimos dispuestos al diálogo: CSG", *La Jornada*, No.3350, 7 Jan. 1994, p.10.
- ¹⁶⁶ Milan Rai, *Chomsky's Politics*, (London, 1995) p.143.
- ¹⁶⁷ Paz, "El nudo de Chiapas", p.14.
- ¹⁶⁸ Paz quoted in Camp, *Intellectuals and the State*, pp.211-212.
- ¹⁶⁹ Paz, "El nudo de Chiapas", p.14.
- ¹⁷⁰ Brewster, Interview with Monsiváis, 1995.
- ¹⁷¹ Rico, "Contribuir a que haya serenidad", p.33.
- ¹⁷² Scherer, "En vísperas de sus 80 años", p.17. Paz maintained, "cerrarlos [medios de comunicación] a la discusión pública de los asuntos públicos es cerrar la vía al proceso de reforma. Así nunca llegaremos a ser una nación democrática."
- ¹⁷³ Octavio Paz, "Chiapas, ¿nudo ciego o tabla de salvación? /I: La recaída de los intelectuales", *La Jornada*, No.3366, 23 Jan. 1994, pp.1, 8. This article was also published in *Vuelta*, No.207, Suplemento extraordinario, Feb. 1994, pp.C-D, and in slightly abbreviated form in *El País*, No.6126, 8 Feb. 1994, p.12.
- ¹⁷⁴ Paz, *Posdata*, pp.69-73.
- ¹⁷⁵ Paz, "Chiapas, ¿nudo ciego?", p.8.
- ¹⁷⁶ Paz, "La conjura de los letrados", pp.10-12. On 4 March 1992 Paz wrote that *Nexos* was composed of a group of intellectuals distinguished more by their declarations and social and political activities than by their work. At the Coloquio, an official Cuban writer and a Sandinista were allowed to speak while no consideration was given to Cuban dissidents and Nicaraguan democrats. The US embargo, Paz continued, was portrayed as the cause of Cuban economic problems, rather than Castro's ineffective policies.
- ¹⁷⁷ Paz, "Chiapas, ¿nudo ciego?", p.8.
- ¹⁷⁸ Rico, "Contribuir a que haya serenidad", p.33.
- ¹⁷⁹ Octavio Paz, "Chiapas, ¿nudo ciego o tabla de salvación? /II Incertidumbre y perspectivas", *La Jornada*, No.3367, 24 Jan. 1994, p.19; also published in *Vuelta*, No.207, Suplemento extraordinario, Feb. 1994, pp.D-E, and *El País*, No.6127, 9 Feb. 1994, p.6.
- ¹⁸⁰ Paz, "Chiapas, ¿nudo ciego? /II", p.19.
- ¹⁸¹ Rico, "Zapatistas contra el PRI", p.2. As stated in chapter five, electoral manipulation was perhaps greatest in Chiapas where Salinas was awarded 89% of the votes; in Ocosingo the figure was 95%.
- ¹⁸² Paz, "Chiapas, ¿nudo ciego? /III", p.19.
- ¹⁸³ Paz, *Posdata*, pp.46-47, 55-57, 69; Scherer, "Octavio Paz: Veo una ausencia", p.7. In 1977, Paz noted the prevalence of dictatorships in Latin America, that were founded by military force. He also expressed concern that the popular revolutions in Cuba and Nicaragua had quickly turned into dictatorships. See, Octavio Paz, (Trans. Helen Lane), *Convergences: Essays on Art and Literature*, (London, 1987), p.116; [N.A.], "Octavio Paz se lanzó", p.1.
- ¹⁸⁴ Pablo Gómez, "La paz de Octavio Paz /I", *La Jornada*, No.3369, 26 Jan. 1994, pp.1, 16; Pablo Gómez, "La paz de Octavio Paz /II", *La Jornada*, No.3370, 27 Jan. 1994, p.16.
- ¹⁸⁵ Octavio Paz, "Chiapas: hechos, dichos, gestos", *Vuelta*, No.208, March 1994, p.57.
- ¹⁸⁶ Octavio Paz, "Chiapas, ¿nudo ciego o tabla de salvación? /III El nudo se deshace o ahoga", *Vuelta*, No.207, Suplemento extraordinario, Feb. 1994, p.F.
- ¹⁸⁷ For a discussion of racism in Mexico see Brewster, "Una guerra de palabras", pp.10-29.
- ¹⁸⁸ Paz, "Chiapas, ¿nudo ciego?", p.H.
- ¹⁸⁹ Paz, "Chiapas: hechos, dichos", p.56.
- ¹⁹⁰ Paz, *Posdata*, p.105.
- ¹⁹¹ Paz, "Chiapas: hechos, dichos", p.56.
- ¹⁹² *Ibid.*, p.56.
- ¹⁹³ Heberto Castillo, "Intelectuales y Chiapas", *Proceso*, No.900, 31 Jan. 1994, p.52.

- ¹⁹⁴ Armando Ponce, "'Deseo que se despoje de rencores inútiles': Benítez sobre Paz", *Proceso*, No.908, 28 March 1994, p.62.
- ¹⁹⁵ Carlos Fuentes, "Chiapas, donde hasta las piedras gritan", *La Jornada*, No.3350, 7 Jan. 1994, p.8.
- ¹⁹⁶ Bañuelos, Jurado, Macías, Olivia, Olmos y Zepeda, "La inteligencia", pp.1-2.
- ¹⁹⁷ Rico, "Contribuir a que haya serenidad", p.33.
- ¹⁹⁸ Braulio Peralta y Luis Enrique Ramírez, "Se pronuncian intelectuales a favor de una solución pacífica en Chiapas", *La Jornada*, No.3347, 4 Jan. 1994, p.25.
- ¹⁹⁹ Fuentes, "Chiapas, donde hasta", p.8.
- ²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p.8.
- ²⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p.8.
- ²⁰² *Ibid.*, p.8; Paz, "Chiapas: ¿nudo ciego", p.8. Fuentes was undoubtedly among those criticised by Paz of enacting their "fantasmas juveniles" when criticising the Army.
- ²⁰³ Fuentes, "Chiapas, donde hasta", p.8.
- ²⁰⁴ Poniatowska, Fuentes, Pacheco, Monsiváis y Castañeda, "Sí se bombardea", p.2.
- ²⁰⁵ Fernando Orgambides, "El Gobierno mexicano investigará los excesos del Ejército en Chiapas", *El País*, No.6103, 15 Jan. 1994, p.7.
- ²⁰⁶ Miguel de la Vega, "Para Fuentes, Chiapas es una lección, la primera revolución poscomunista: nos ha obligado a darnos cuenta de todo lo que hemos olvidado", *Proceso*, No.911, 18 April 1994, p.63.
- ²⁰⁷ Thierry Malinak, "Nosotros sólo respetamos a los indios en los museos", *El País*, No.6233, 27 May 1994, p.10.
- ²⁰⁸ Paz, "El nudo de Chiapas", p.14. Although as discussed above, Paz unconsciously also reached this conclusion. See, Paz, "Chiapas, ¿nudo ciego?", p.F.
- ²⁰⁹ De la Vega, "Para Fuentes", p.60.
- ²¹⁰ Carlos Fuentes, "Las dos democracias son una sola", *La Jornada*, No.3385, 11 Feb. 1994, p.12.
- ²¹¹ *Ibid.*, p.12.
- ²¹² Paz, "El nudo de Chiapas", p.14.
- ²¹³ Ignacio Rodríguez Reyna, "Democracia, ahora, o tendremos muchos Chiapas", *El Financiero*, No.3265, 27 Feb. 1994, p.19.
- ²¹⁴ De la Vega, "Para Fuentes", p.60.
- ²¹⁵ Fuentes, "Las dos democracias", p.12.
- ²¹⁶ Paz, "Chiapas, los dichos", p.56.
- ²¹⁷ Paz, "Chiapas, ¿nudo ciego?", p.8.
- ²¹⁸ Luis Enrique Ramírez, "Asistimos a la primera rebelión poscomunista: Carlos Fuentes", *La Jornada*, No.3384, 10 Feb. 1994, p.27.
- ²¹⁹ Fuentes, *Nuevo tiempo*, p.130.
- ²²⁰ Carlos Fuentes, "¿Choque fatal o imaginación democrática?", *La Jornada*, No.3473, 11 May 1994, p.12.
- ²²¹ *Ibid.*, p.12.
- ²²² Albarrán de Alba, Beltrán del Río y Jáquez, "El Grupo San Angel", p.7.
- ²²³ Orgambides, "Entregaré el poder", p.6.
- ²²⁴ De la Vega, "Para Fuentes", p.60.
- ²²⁵ Morales, "Juan Bañuelos", p.38.
- ²²⁶ Elena Poniatowska, "Moletiques y pasiones", *La Jornada*, No.3360, 17 Jan. 1994, p.16.
- ²²⁷ Peralta y Ramírez, "Se pronuncian los intelectuales", p.25; Poniatowska, Fuentes, Pacheco, Monsiváis y Castañeda, "Sí, se bombardea", p.2; Elena Poniatowska, "Mujeres en contra de la violencia", *La Jornada*, No.3352, 9 Jan. 1994, p.2. This letter was signed by 26 women and 7 women's groups.
- ²²⁸ Although she did not mention them, her readers would not need to be reminded of the Tlatelolco massacre and Jueves de Corpus.
- ²²⁹ Elena Poniatowska, "Chiapas o la desesperación", *La Jornada*, No.3352, 9 Jan. 1994, pp.1, 12.
- ²³⁰ García Flores, "Diálogo con Elena Poniatowska", p.vii; Poniatowska, "El futuro, una gran interrogante", p.17.
- ²³¹ Poniatowska, "Chiapas o la desesperación", p.12.
- ²³² Elena Poniatowska, "Juan Bañuelos: Chiapas, inicio de la guerra de la pulga; llegó para quedarse", *La Jornada*, No.3353, 10 Jan. 1994, p.22.
- ²³³ *Ibid.*, p.22. Bañuelos specified Chiapas intellectuals Rosario Castellanos, Jaime Sabines, Daniel Robles Saso, Eraclio Zepeda, Elva Macías and Oscar Oliva.
- ²³⁴ The massacre took place in Venustiano Carranza, Chiapas.
- ²³⁵ Fuego, "Marcos, Chiapas, Cuba", p.61.
- ²³⁶ Correa, "Infantería, tanquetas, helicópteros", pp.18-21; Leñero, "La espera, la declaración", p.7.

- ²³⁷ Subcomandante Insurgente Marcos, "Chiapas: el Sureste en dos vientos", p.49. On 27 January 1994, Marcos remarked that those who were writing about the rebellion in the press had first consulted copies of *México desconocido* to establish the location of the State of Chiapas.
- ²³⁸ Poniatowska, "Moletiques", p.16.
- ²³⁹ In turn, Poniatowska's work affected others: Fuentes would later repeat the charge that Indians were only respected in museums. See, Malinak, "Nosotros sólo respetamos", p.10.
- ²⁴⁰ Paz, "Chiapas: hechos, dichos", p.56.
- ²⁴¹ Poniatowska, "Moletiques", p.16.
- ²⁴² Poniatowska, "Posición frente", pp.60-61.
- ²⁴³ Pozas, who died in January 1994, worked extensively in Chiapas. See Ricardo Pozas, *Juan Pérez Jolote: Autobiografía de un tzotzil*, (México D.F., 1948).
- ²⁴⁴ Elena Poniatowska, "Chiapas y Ricardo Pozas /II", *La Jornada*, No.3366, 23 Jan. 1994, p.28.
- ²⁴⁵ Gómez, "La paz de Octavio Paz". As discussed above, Gómez condemned Paz's support of the government intervention in Chiapas.
- ²⁴⁶ Elena Poniatowska, "Sólo la víctima sabe", *La Jornada*, No.3374, 31 Jan. 1994, p.19.
- ²⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p.19.
- ²⁴⁸ Poniatowska, "Chiapas y Ricardo Pozas /II", p.28.
- ²⁴⁹ Poniatowska, "Sólo la víctima", p.19.
- ²⁵⁰ Brewster, Interview with Velázquez Alba.
- ²⁵¹ Poniatowska, "Sólo la víctima", p.19.
- ²⁵² Carlos Monsiváis, "¿De qué puede arrepentirse el General Absalón Castellanos?", *El Financiero*, No.3258, 20 Feb. 1994, p.22.
- ²⁵³ Carlos Monsiváis, "En Chiapas, miles de millones de fianza, por defender el precio de la maiz", *Proceso*, No.508, 28 July 1986, p.17.
- ²⁵⁴ Carlos Monsiváis, "Acuerdos y desacuerdos sobre Chiapas", *Proceso*, No.897, 10 Jan. 1994, p.55.
- ²⁵⁵ Carlos Monsiváis, "Chiapas: las posibilidades de la ética", *El Financiero*, No.3223, 16 Jan. 1994, p.26.
- ²⁵⁶ Monsiváis, "Acuerdos y desacuerdos", pp.56, 58.
- ²⁵⁷ Fuentes, "Las dos democracias", p.12.
- ²⁵⁸ Paz, "El nudo de Chiapas", p.14.
- ²⁵⁹ Monsiváis, "Acuerdos y desacuerdos", p.56.
- ²⁶⁰ Monsiváis, "Chiapas: las posibilidades", p.26.
- ²⁶¹ Monsiváis endorsed many such documents throughout 1994. See in particular: Poniatowska, Fuentes, Pacheco, Monsiváis, y Castañeda, "Si se bombardea", p.2; Elena Poniatowska, Juan Bañuelos, Ruy Perez Tamayo, José Emilio Pacheco, Cristina Pacheco, Carlos Monsiváis, Jesusa Rodríguez, "Demandan respeto a misiones humanitarias", *La Jornada*, No.3398, 24 Feb. 1994, p.2; 148 writers, politicians, and journalists, "Los mexicanos nos manifestamos por la pluralidad, la convivencia, el respeto y la paz", *Proceso*, No.927, 8 Aug. 1994, p.59.
- ²⁶² Monsiváis, "Chiapas: las posibilidades", p.26.
- ²⁶³ Monsiváis, "Acuerdos y desacuerdos", p.58.
- ²⁶⁴ Monsiváis, "Chiapas: las posibilidades", p.26.
- ²⁶⁵ Anthony DePalma, "For Mexico's oppressed Indians, smothered hopes and promises not kept", *New York Times International*, No.49728, 15 June 1994, p.12.
- ²⁶⁶ Carlos Monsiváis, "Dos movimientos paralelos: simpatía y resistencia", *Proceso*, No.899, 24 Jan. 1994, p.51.
- ²⁶⁷ Monsiváis, "Chiapas: las posibilidades", p.26.
- ²⁶⁸ Carlos Monsiváis, "¿Y quién mayor culpa tiene?", *El Financiero*, No.3230, 23 Jan. 1994, p.24.
- ²⁶⁹ Monsiváis, "1968: Perfiles, claves", pp.3-6.
- ²⁷⁰ Monsiváis, "¿Y quién mayor culpa tiene?", p.24.
- ²⁷¹ Monsiváis, "¿De qué puede arrepentirse?", p.22.
- ²⁷² Monsiváis, "Acuerdos y desacuerdos", p.56.
- ²⁷³ Paz, "Chiapas: ¿nudo ciego?", p.F; Enrique Krauze, "El milagro del mestizaje", *El País*, No.6149, 3 March 1994, pp.13-14. Krauze failed to mention that both the Zapotec Juárez and Díaz, who had some Indian blood, turned their backs on their indigenous roots; doing nothing to improve the daily lives of native Mexicans.
- ²⁷⁴ Aukan Huilcaman Paillama, "El milagro del mestizaje", *El País*, No.6167, 21 March 1994, p.13. Huilcaman Paillama is one of a new generation of indigenous leaders. In 1997 he was working to secure Pan American indigenous rights.

- ²⁷⁵ Carlos Monsiváis, "Racismo a la mexicana", *El Financiero*, No.3300, 3 April 1994, p.20. For a discussion of Juárez's ties to Indian cultures see Brian Hamnett, "Benito Juárez, Early Liberalism and the Regional Politics of Oaxaca", *Bulletin of Latin American Research*, Vol.10, No.1, 1991, pp.3-21.
- ²⁷⁶ Brewster, Interview with Monsiváis, 1995.
- ²⁷⁷ Carlos Monsiváis, "Nadie lo dijo primero: temas y lugares comunes del 94", *Vuelta*, No.213, Aug. 1994, p.38.
- ²⁷⁸ Monsiváis had been moved by the multi-cultural, multi-lingual talks in San Cristóbal. See Carlos Monsiváis, "El nuevo país: un sueño de fin de siglo y la sociedad del espectáculo", *Proceso*, No.904, 28 Feb. 1994, pp.16-23.
- ²⁷⁹ Monsiváis, "Dos movimientos paralelos", pp.51-53.
- ²⁸⁰ Carlos Monsiváis, "¿De qué se ríe el Subcomandante?", *El Financiero*, No.3251, 13 Feb. 1994, p.26.
- ²⁸¹ Carlos Monsiváis, *Los rituales de caos*, (México D.F., 1995), p.135. Monsiváis discussed the national obsession with statues and the numerous monuments to Benito Juárez.
- ²⁸² Monsiváis, "¿De qué se ríe?", p.26.
- ²⁸³ Monsiváis, "El nuevo país", p.23.
- ²⁸⁴ Brewster, Interview with Monsiváis, 1995.
- ²⁸⁵ Camp, *Intellectuals and the State*, p.38.
- ²⁸⁶ The controversial Luis Pazos, for example, had a regular column in which he wrote against the Zapatistas and condemned Monsiváis as an intellectual dinosaur whose views no longer coincided with reality. In an interesting editorial decision, his articles were often printed directly opposite those of Monsiváis. See, Luis Pazos, "Dinosaurios intelectuales", *El Financiero*, No.3375, 18 June 1994, p.23.
- ²⁸⁷ Claire Brewster, Interview with Elena Poniatowska, Mexico City, 6 Dec. 1994. Poniatowska nonetheless remained a member of the Consejo Editorial of *Nexos* until 1997.
- ²⁸⁸ Rolando Cordera, "México ante la adversidad", *Nexos*, No.197, May 1994, p.35.
- ²⁸⁹ Monsiváis, "Nadie lo dijo", p.38.
- ²⁹⁰ Monsiváis, "¿De qué se ríe?", p.26.
- ²⁹¹ Monsiváis, "¿De qué puede arrepentirse?", p.22.
- ²⁹² Brewster, Interview with Monsiváis, 1995.
- ²⁹³ Monsiváis, "Dos movimientos paralelos", p.51.
- ²⁹⁴ Brewster, Interview with Monsiváis, 1995.
- ²⁹⁵ Quoted by Luis Enrique Ramírez, "La Convención debe ser un organismo en busca de la paz", *La Jornada*, No.3573, 19 Aug. 1994, p.29.
- ²⁹⁶ [N.A.], "Krauze: quisiera buscar la democracia con Marcos, pero por la vía pacífica", *La Jornada*, No.3544, 21 July 1994, p.13.
- ²⁹⁷ Subcomandante Insurgente Marcos, "Invita Marcos a Carlos Fuentes...", *La Jornada*, No.3527, 4 July 1994, p.13. Marcos quoted Fuentes's prologue to John Mason Hart, *El México revolucionario*, (México D.F., 1990).
- ²⁹⁸ It was perhaps this incident that inspired Fuentes to examine the strength of a writer's convictions in his novel *Diana*. See, Fuentes, *Diana*, p.185. This passage is discussed in chapter one.
- ²⁹⁹ García Flores, "Aclarar los humos", p.iii.
- ³⁰⁰ Marcos, "Invita Marcos a Carlos Fuentes...", p.13.
- ³⁰¹ Martínez, "Sin la rebelión zapatista", p.22.
- ³⁰² Fuentes, "Chiapas, donde hasta", p.8; De la Vega, "Para Fuentes", p.60.
- ³⁰³ Carlos Fuentes, "El progreso incluye a todos", *La Jornada*, No.3530, 7 July 1994, p.20.
- ³⁰⁴ Burbach, "Roots of the Postmodern Rebellion", pp.122-123; Brewster, "Una guerra de palabras", pp.9-39.
- ³⁰⁵ Fuentes, "El progreso", p.20.
- ³⁰⁶ Indeed, as a leading public figure it would have been easier for Fuentes to attend the CND if he had donned a balaclava and hidden his identity.
- ³⁰⁷ Fuentes, "El progreso", p.20.
- ³⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p.20. As stated above, the Grupo San Angel also declined to attend.
- ³⁰⁹ Subcomandante Insurgente Marcos, "Carta a Enrique Krauze", *La Jornada*, No.3543, 20 July 1994, pp.1, 24.
- ³¹⁰ Enrique Krauze, "El despotismo romántico", *Reforma*, No.249, 8 Aug. 1994, p.8; [N.A.], "Krauze: quisiera buscar la democracia", p.13.
- ³¹¹ Enrique Krauze, "Carta a Samuel Ruiz", *Proceso*, No.927, 8 Aug. 1994, p.46.
- ³¹² [N.A.], "Reunion posterior a la Convención, propone el Grupo San Angel a Marcos", *El Financiero*, No.3417, 30 July 1994, p.18.

- ³¹³ Ibid., 1995; Subcomandante Insurgente Marcos, "Invita a Monsiváis y a la R.", *La Jornada*, No.3543, 20 July 1994, pp.1, 18.
- ³¹⁴ Carlos Monsiváis, "Respuesta a Marcos", *La Jornada*, No.3550, 27 July 1994, pp.1, 16.
- ³¹⁵ Ibid., p.16.
- ³¹⁶ Marcos, "Invita Marcos a Carlos Fuentes...", p.13.
- ³¹⁷ Monsiváis, "Respuesta a Marcos", p.16.
- ³¹⁸ Carlos Monsiváis, "La Convención en Aguascalientes", *El Financiero*, No.3425, 7 Aug. 1994, p.30.
- ³¹⁹ Leñero, "La espera, la declaración," p.10. Asked to nominate the work of authors he valued, Marcos replied, "de Monsiváis; de la Poniatowska, de *La noche de Tlatelolco*. De todo Cortázar, Fuentes, Vargas Llosa cuando todavía era digerible, y García Márquez que es aparte, o sea especial." He added that he admired Paz's poetry.
- ³²⁰ Subcomandante Insurgente Marcos, "Invita Marcos a Poniatowska a posar su rubio pie sobre las rebeldes tierras", *La Jornada*, No.3553, 30 July 1994, p.7. It was added that Marcos asked Poniatowska to publish this letter to illustrate his different techniques of style.
- ³²¹ The inclusion of Fernández indicated Poniatowska's close contact with him. Like Jesusa Palanceres, the students of 1968, and the earthquake victims, this is another example of a close friendship forged with someone she had met in the course of her work.
- ³²² Brewster, Interview with Poniatowska, 1996.
- ³²³ Ibid. Poniatowska claimed to have hours of unedited tape recordings. See, Elena Poniatowska, "El cepillo de dientes rosa", *La Jornada*, No.3553, 30 July 1994, pp.7-8; Elena Poniatowska, "Si sólo fuera cosa de Marcos, el EZLN ya hubiera tronado, dice el Sup", *La Jornada*, No.3555, 1 Aug. 1994, pp.1, 18; Elena Poniatowska, "Marcos: La sociedad civil impuso el cese de fuego al CSG y al EZLN", *La Jornada*, No.3555, 1 Aug. 1994, pp.18-19; Poniatowska, "Marcos: quieren desaparecer", p.17; Elena Poniatowska, "Iglesia y ONG llegaron al vacío gubernamental, afirma Marcos", *La Jornada*, No.3557, 3 Aug. 1994, pp.13, 18-19.
- ³²⁴ Poniatowska, "Marcos; la sociedad civil", p.18.
- ³²⁵ Brewster, Interview with Poniatowska, 1996. Poniatowska pointed out this was done on the understanding that strict confidentiality was observed. The Zapatistas wore their masks when photographed by her daughter, Paula Haro Poniatowska.
- ³²⁶ Poniatowska, "Si sólo fuera", p.18.
- ³²⁷ Ibid., p.18.
- ³²⁸ For a discussion of Castellanos's government see Brewster, "*Una guerra de palabras*", pp.35-36.
- ³²⁹ Poniatowska, "Posición frente", pp.60-61.
- ³³⁰ Poniatowska, "Si sólo fuera", p.18.
- ³³¹ Poniatowska, "Marcos: quieren desaparecer", p.17.
- ³³² Poniatowska, "Marcos: La sociedad civil", p.18.
- ³³³ Poniatowska, "Chiapas o la desesperación", p.12.
- ³³⁴ Guillermo Correa, Salvador Corro, Julio César López e Ignacio Ramirez, "La sociedad civil si respondió; los intelectuales tuvieron miedo de asistir a la convención: Marcos", *Proceso*, No.927, 8 Aug. 1994, p.12.
- ³³⁵ Ramirez, "La Convención", p.29.
- ³³⁶ Subcomandante Marcos, "Discurso ante la CND", *EZLN documentos*, p.305.
- ³³⁷ Elena Poniatowska, "La CND: de naves mayores y menores", *La Jornada*, No.3570, 16 Aug. 1994, p.19.
- ³³⁸ Ibid., p.19.
- ³³⁹ Monsiváis, "Crónica de una Convención", pp.27, 31.
- ³⁴⁰ Poniatowska, "La CND", p.19.
- ³⁴¹ Monsiváis, "Crónica de una Convención", p.27.
- ³⁴² Brewster, Interview with Monsiváis, 1995.
- ³⁴³ Ramirez, "La Convención", p.29.
- ³⁴⁴ The scene is reminiscent of that discussed in chapter four in which the Governor of Jalisco tried to unmask Superbarrio. See, Monje, "Superbarrio crece y salva su máscara", p.28.
- ³⁴⁵ Monsiváis, "Crónica de una Convención", pp.28-29, 31.
- ³⁴⁶ Brewster, Interview with Monsiváis, 1995.
- ³⁴⁷ Monsiváis, "Crónica de una Convención", p.24; also in *EZLN documentos*, p.313.
- ³⁴⁸ Krauze, "El despotismo romántico", p.8.
- ³⁴⁹ Monsiváis, "Crónica de una Convención", p.31.
- ³⁵⁰ Fuentes, "Las dos democracias", p.12.

³⁵¹ Dianne Solis, "Mexican dissidents gather in Chiapas as rebel leader aims to build support", *Wall Street Journal*, 5 Aug. 1994, p.6. The somewhat ironically named Primitivo Rodríguez, a member of an election watch-dog group, was quoted as saying "in astonishment": "They are asking me to bring my own roll of toilet paper!"

³⁵² Ramírez, "La Convención", p.29.

³⁵³ Quoted in [N.A.], "Mexican Party runs at full tilt as election approaches", *Wall Street Journal*, 29 July 1994, p.5.

³⁵⁴ Octavio Paz, "El asesinato de Colosio, 'Un signo ominoso de la moral pública en México'", *Proceso*, No.908, 28 March 1994, p.61.

³⁵⁵ Octavio Paz, "El plato de sangre", *Vuelta*, No.209, April 1994, p.8. Had Paz adopted this creed at an earlier stage some of his former friendships might have been preserved.

³⁵⁶ Paz, "El asesinato", p.61.

³⁵⁷ Ernesto Zedillo, "La reivindicación del PRI", *Vuelta*, No.213, Aug. 1994, p.33. Zedillo quoted from *Tiempo nublado* (1983). If Zedillo had misinterpreted Paz, the editor of *Vuelta* would surely have said so. It is interesting that Zedillo used "el voto" and not "el pueblo" when referring to the electorate. Was he unconsciously acknowledging a difference between the people's choice and the vote attributed to them?

³⁵⁸ Raúl Llanos Samaniego, "Un triunfo opositor sería menos riesgo: Fuentes", *La Jornada*, No.3574, 20 Aug. 1994, p.11.

³⁵⁹ Fernando Orgambides, "Ernesto Zedillo ofrece una 'plataforma común' a la oposición para formar un Gobierno plural", *El País*, No.6322, 24 Aug. 1994, p.3. The official results were as follows: Ernesto Zedillo de León (PRI), 48.17%; Diego Fernández de Cevallos (PAN), 29.63%; Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas (PRD), 16.15%; others, 6.05%.

150 cultural figures were asked about their preferred candidate; the result was Cuauhtémoc 48; Zedillo 21; others 5; **33 would not say; 24 were indecisive**; there were **6 abstentions**, and **13 did not answer** (my emphasis). Intellectuals and artists were, perhaps, in line with the Mexican public. Those who would not commit themselves were likely to have voted for Zedillo, as happened elsewhere in the country. See Miguel de la Vega, Héctor Rivera, Rosario Manzanos, Armando Ponce y Ana Cecilia Terrazas, "Encuesta sobre las elecciones entre 150 personajes de la cultura", *Proceso*, No.828, 15 Aug. 1994, p.59.

³⁶⁰ Fernando Orgambides, "El virtual presidente destaca los puntos de acuerdo entre los tres grandes partidos", *El País*, No.6321, 23 Aug. 1994, p.3.

³⁶¹ Brewster, Interview with Monsiváis, 1995.

³⁶² Georgina Saldierna, "El Grupo San Angel no sirvió al cambio democrático: Bartra", *La Jornada*, No.3581, 28 Aug. 1994, p.7.

³⁶³ Camp, *Politics in Mexico*, pp.178-181.

³⁶⁴ Brewster, Interview with Sheridan.

³⁶⁵ Camp, *Politics in Mexico*, p.145.

³⁶⁶ Octavio Paz, "Las elecciones de 1994: doble mandato", *Vuelta*, No.215, Oct. 1994, pp.12-13.

³⁶⁷ Brewster, Interview with Monsiváis, 1995; Brewster, Interview with Sheridan, 1996; Saldierna, "El Grupo San Angel no sirvió", p.7.

³⁶⁸ Paz, "Las elecciones de 1994", p.13.

³⁶⁹ Patricia Vega, "La propuesta SOS instauraría un estado policiaco en California... Carlos Fuentes", *La Jornada*, No.3609, 25 Sept. 1994, pp.1, 12.

³⁷⁰ [N.A.], "Zedillo deberá atender el rezago social, político y democrático", *La Jornada*, No.3641, 24 Oct. 1994, p.5.

³⁷¹ Fuentes, *Nuevo tiempo*, p.163.

³⁷² Armando Ponce, "La implacable crítica de Monsiváis en defensa de una sociedad 'sacrificada'", *Proceso*, No.1123, 10 May 1998, p.15.

³⁷³ Haber, "The Art and Implications of Political Restructuring", in Cook, Middlebrook and Molinar Horcasitas, (eds.), *The Politics of Economic Restructuring*, pp.289-90. Haber noted that by 1990 it was obvious Salinas was not enacting democratic reform, but fortifying the authoritarian regime.

³⁷⁴ Alexander Cockburn, "A Fistful of Promises", *New Statesman and Society*, No.11, 18 March 1994, p.22.

³⁷⁵ Fernando Orgambides, "Una prensa más sincera", *El País*, No.6128, 10 Feb. 1994, p.6.

³⁷⁶ Poniatowska, "Marcos: la sociedad civil", pp.18, 19.

³⁷⁷ Paz, *The Labyrinth of Solitude*, p.149.

³⁷⁸ Paz, *One Earth*, p.126.

³⁷⁹ Paz, "Chiapas, ¿nudo ciego? /I", p.8.

- ³⁸⁰ Jørgensen, *Engaging Dialogues*, p.65.
- ³⁸¹ Monsiváis, "¿De qué se ríe?", p.26.
- ³⁸² Brewster, Interview with Monsiváis, 1995.
- ³⁸³ Ibid.
- ³⁸⁴ Heberto Castillo, "No al sectarismo, de aquí y de allá", *Proceso*, No.927, 8 Aug. 1994, pp.46-48; Raúl Salinas de Gortari, "Carta a Heberto Castillo", *Proceso*, No.929, 23 Aug. 1994, p.78. Raúl Salinas emphatically denied the accusation.
- ³⁸⁵ Handelman, *Mexican Politics*, pp.164, 178. Raúl Salinas was charged with involvement in the assassination of Ruiz Massieu. Handelman declared that many Mexicans believed that Carlos Salinas was fully aware of, if not party to, his brother's misdemeanours. On 21 January 1999 Raúl Salinas was found guilty of being the intellectual author of the murder of Ruiz Massieu and was sentenced to 50 years imprisonment.
- ³⁸⁶ Brewster, Interview with Monsiváis, 1996.
- ³⁸⁷ Handelman, *Mexican Politics*, pp.19, 178. 612,000 people took part in the unofficial survey, of whom 97% agreed that Salinas should face an investigation. Salinas fled to the United States, then made his way to Ireland via Canada and Cuba.
- ³⁸⁸ Naranjo, [N.T.], *Proceso*, No.957, 6 March 1995, p.51.
- ³⁸⁹ Brewster, Interviews with Monsiváis, 1995, 1996.
- ³⁹⁰ Brewster, Interview with Monsiváis, 1996.
- ³⁹¹ Brewster, Interviews with Monsiváis, 1995, 1996.
- ³⁹² Carlos Fuentes, *Feliz nuevo año*, (México D.F., 1995). The booklet was incorporated into later editions of *Nuevo tiempo mexicano*.
- ³⁹³ Ibid., pp.8, 20-21, 32.
- ³⁹⁴ Poniatowska, *La noche*, p.91. Interestingly, in 1969 student leader Eduardo Valle stated that the government should beware of the "generation of 68". He predicted that children aged between 10 and 15 years in 1968 would forever remember the atrocities committed against the students. Marcos was 11 or 12 years old in 1968.
- ³⁹⁵ Pascal Beltrán del Río, "Recomendación del Chase Manhattan al gobierno mexicano: Hay que eliminar a los Zapatistas", *Proceso*, No.954, 13 Feb. 1995, p.9. *Proceso* is distributed one week in advance of its publication date.
- ³⁹⁶ Carlos Tello Díaz, "The Rebellion of the EZLN", Open Seminar, Centre of Latin American Studies, Cambridge, 2 March 1998. Tello maintained that Marcos was betrayed by Subcomandante Daniel, "one of two white deputies".
- ³⁹⁷ Carlos Fuentes, "La cuestión chiapaneca", *La Jornada*, No.3748, 14 Feb. 1995, pp.1, 43; also published in *El País*, No.6500, 20 Feb. 1995, p.13.
- ³⁹⁸ See photograph captioned, "Recibíamos a los granaderos con cohetones y bombas molotov. Ese era nuestro poderoso arsenal" in Poniatowska, *La noche*, p.xviii.
- ³⁹⁹ Fuentes, "La cuestión", p.43.
- ⁴⁰⁰ Manuel Robles, "El conflicto de Chiapas divide a los intelectuales", *Proceso*, No.956, 27 Feb. 1995, pp.60-61. Emmanuel Carballo claimed that Asiain was commissioned by *Vuelta* to answer Fuentes's article. He considered the polemic to be an extension of the *Nexos/Vuelta* wrangles of 1990 and 1992. This was somewhat ironic, he added, because both groups had supported Salinas's neoliberal policies. Evidently these were personal, not ideological battles.
- Tomás Segovia, "Las respuestas de Aurelio Asiain /I", *La Jornada*, No.3753, 19 Feb. 1995, pp.1, 12; Aurelio Asiain to John King, Mexico City, Feb. 1995. Segovia stated that Asiain's arguments seemed to belong to an older different generation than his own. Segovia had been the first Jefe de Redacción at *Plural*, and had worked closely with Paz for years. Asiain emphatically denied that Paz had anything to do with his articles, a stance he admitted that few people accepted.
- ⁴⁰¹ Aurelio Asiain, "Las preguntas de Carlos Fuentes", *La Jornada*, No.3750, 16 Feb. 1995, p.14; Segovia, "Las respuestas /I", pp.1, 12; Tomás Segovia, "Las respuestas de Aurelio Asiain /II", *La Jornada*, No.3754, 20 Feb. 1995, p.14; Aurelio Asiain, "Al maestro con cariño", *La Jornada*, No.3757, 23 Feb. 1995, p.13; Aurelio Asiain, "Al maestro con cariño /II", *La Jornada*, No.3758, 24 Feb. 1995, p.18.
- ⁴⁰² Ana Cecilia Terrazas, "Las diferencias, patéticas, nimias, cuestiones de ego", *Proceso*, No.956, 27 Feb. 1995, p.62.
- ⁴⁰³ Manuel Robles, "'La polarización entre fuerzas sociales de Chiapas, no la de intelectuales, es lo grave y se agrava': Carlos Montemayor", *Proceso*, No.956, 27 Feb. 1995, p.63.
- ⁴⁰⁴ Sanjuana Martínez, "'Lo menos que pueden hacer los intelectuales es unirse y ayudar': Joaquin Sabina, vocero del grupo español contra la guerra en Chiapas", *Proceso*, No.956, 27 Feb. 1995, pp.64-65.

⁴⁰⁵ Octavio Paz, "A la opinión pública", *La Jornada*, No.3758, 24 Feb. 1995, p.15; also published in *El País*, No.6505, 25 Feb. 1995, p.11. Those who signed the letter claimed to do so as citizens following their consciences. Krauze was not among them: was he trying to extricate himself from an extension of the row he began with his attack on Fuentes in 1988?

⁴⁰⁶ Octavio Paz, "Equívoca referencia a *Vuelta* en la primera plana del día 24", *La Jornada*, No.3759, 25 Feb. 1995, p.2; Brewster, Interview with Sheridan. Guillermo Sheridan maintained there was no pressure placed upon any of the *Vuelta* team to endorse Paz's document. Neither Sheridan nor Fabienne Bradu signed the letter (both were away from Mexico at the time); there were no recriminations, nor were they asked to comment upon the issue.

⁴⁰⁷ Paz, "A la opinión pública", p.15.

⁴⁰⁸ Elsa Guzmán Flores, "La crisis de México y sus intelectuales", *El País*, No.6522, 14 March 1995, p.14.

⁴⁰⁹ Rosa Icela Rodríguez, "Marchan 100 mil por la paz: tercera protesta en una semana", *La Jornada*, No.3753, 19 Feb. 1995, p.10. It was estimated that 100,000 people marched to the Zócalo, Mexico City, to call for peace in Chiapas. It was the third such rally in a week.

Rosario Ibarra gathered over 500 signatures from people as far afield as Europe to ask Zedillo to stop the war in Chiapas. See, *La Jornada*, No.3750, 16 Feb. 1995, p.20.

[N.A.], "Todos nosotros también sabemos", *La Jornada*, No.3752, 18 Feb. 1995, p.19. A full-page spread in support of Bishop Samuel Ruiz carried approximately 2000 signatures protesting against links made between Ruiz and the Zapatistas.

⁴¹⁰ Demetrio Sodi de la Tijera, "Manifiesto por la paz en Chiapas", *La Jornada*, No.3755, 21 Feb. 1995, p.20. Many of those included were linked to the Grupo San Angel; none of the *Vuelta* group signed it.

⁴¹¹ Many authors, "Demandan que se detenga la acción militar en Chiapas", *La Jornada*, No.3745, 11 Feb. 1995, p.2. Poniatowska's signature was second on the list of forty journalists, authors and artists.

⁴¹² Brewster, Interview with Monsiváis, 1995.

⁴¹³ For further discussion of the image of Marcos and the effects of his mask, see Brewster, "*Una guerra de palabras*", pp.55-61.

⁴¹⁴ Brewster, Interview with Monsiváis, 1996.

⁴¹⁵ Efrén, "Los intelectuales y el doctor", *Proceso*, No.1011, 18 March 1996, p.55.

⁴¹⁶ Brewster, Interview with Monsiváis, 1996.

⁴¹⁷ Camp, *Politics in Mexico*, p.233.

Conclusion

In 1969 Fuentes described the Mexican president as "un representante pasajero".¹ The president might be all-powerful, but his position was temporary; once Díaz Ordaz left office there was hope for a better future. Paz and Fuentes were willing to work with President Echeverría who appeared eager to offer democratic overtures to make amends for Tlatelolco. Both overlooked Echeverría's culpability as Secretary for Internal Affairs and Fuentes accepted his denial of involvement in Jueves de Corpus, even after the promised investigation failed to materialise. Yet by supporting Echeverría, Paz and Fuentes endorsed a political system that was far removed from democratic checks and balances. Individual presidents may pay lip-service to intellectuals, but any influence they held would be limited to the six year cycle. While such a system remained, could intellectuals be anything other than "representantes pasajeros" themselves? Jorge Castañeda claimed that close ties between intellectuals and those with political power were "a logical consequence of the intellectuals' strength: one cannot exist without the other".² This is, perhaps, overstated: those with power may have used intellectuals, but they could survive without them. Yet intellectuals did play an important role, why else would Mexican presidents tolerate and, at times, outwardly court them? Presidents Echeverría and Salinas both ostentatiously incorporated intellectuals into their governments to distance themselves from the immediate past: Echeverría from Tlatelolco; Salinas to soften the fraud of 1988. Yet in 1991, when Salinas was courting intellectuals, Poniatska stated that intellectual participation in political decisions was "una mera ilusión".³ The following year, Gerardo Ochoa Sandy echoed similar sentiments: "[Los intelectuales] exhortan, sugieren, legitiman. Pero no mandan. Las decisiones las toman otros. Los del equipo del presidente Salinas."⁴ Did Paz and Fuentes misinterpret the overtones of apparently sympathetic presidents such as

Echeverría and Salinas? Was their self-belief greater than the evidence around them? Or did they think they could best realise their democratic goals by working within the system, no matter how limited their opportunities might be?

Paz and Fuentes would argue that since 1970 their views have been given some consideration by several presidents and that they have tried to exploit this to achieve political change. If, in striving to lead the presidents, they fraternised with those with political power neither Paz nor Fuentes strayed from their own solid principles. Paz withdrew his support for Echeverría in 1976 after the *Excelsior* affair; Fuentes renounced López Portillo when he awarded an ambassadorship to Díaz Ordaz in 1977, and berated Zedillo for breaking the cease-fire in 1995. In 1991 Paz voiced satisfaction with his contribution of the last twenty years; rejoicing in "la convicción del deber cumplido". He explained, "en México somos testigos de avances considerables en el camino hacia la democracia y el pluralismo". *Vuelta*, he continued, "ha sido determinante" in this.⁵ As has been shown, Paz and Fuentes adopted different tactics for each president; Monsiváis and, to a lesser extent, Poniatowska were constant critics. The volume and content of their comments indicates the passion stimulated by episodes of national importance; each writer responded with deep conviction. Were they successful? Paz and Fuentes could claim that some of their ideas became policy, albeit adapted to suit government interests. Monsiváis and Poniatowska enjoyed notable victories: in 1977 Díaz Ordaz resigned as ambassador to Spain; in 1993 the victims of Tlatelolco were given a memorial; in 1994 and 1995 Salinas and Zedillo withdrew from Chiapas. They did not achieve these measures alone, but Monsiváis and Poniatowska formed an essential part of the protests that made the government concede to public opinion.

In October 1990, Miguel Angel Granados Chapa declared that Paz's attitude had transformed during the last twenty-five years. He accused Paz of being guilty of the dogmatic totalitarianism that he purported to be against.⁶ Yet Paz's fixed beliefs had been apparent in the 1950s and were instrumental in the founding of *Plural*. In October 1968 Paz made an emphatic, moral stance against a government he felt was acting against its people. Paz was then placed in the mould of a left-wing dissident: a position to which he had never aspired. His consequent analysis of the massacre provoked disapproval and unease, and his responses to events in 1988 and 1994 were deemed to be a betrayal of his 'former self': yet had such a person ever existed? Granados Chapa might argue that Paz's support of presidents Salinas and Zedillo provided further 'evidence' of his inconsistency. But were not Paz's solutions to the Chiapas conflict those expressed in *Posdata*; the book that had been the object of much criticism within Mexico? Paz would, and often did, insist that his views had not altered. Indeed, Paz remained anchored to his already expressed convictions. The difference was that this time he used them to condone the government interventions. Back in November 1968, Paz voiced his disappointment that the political system had not been modified and renovated as he had hoped.⁷ In 1971 Paz returned to Mexico perceiving that spaces had been opened for critical comment and constructive debate; although no longer a government official, Paz wanted to make a political contribution. By 1988 Paz believed that the PRI had been adapted and reconstructed, and that democracy would gradually be realised. Paz saw the Zapatistas as a threat to the accomplishments of the last twenty years; hence, he argued, their rebellion must be stopped. He endorsed Salinas's use of force as a means of ending it.

Fuentes's relationship with those in power likewise followed a definite pattern. A constant critic of Díaz Ordaz, Fuentes became a staunch supporter of Echeverría, in response to his democratic overtones. He intended to continue this approach with Echeverría's successor; yet when President López Portillo awarded an ambassadorship to Díaz Ordaz, Fuentes immediately resigned his government post and distanced himself from the regime. In the same way that he had tried to instigate change under Echeverría, Fuentes was prepared to work with President Salinas. Disregarding the accusations of fraud surrounding the 1988 election, Fuentes praised Salinas's policies, notably his economic programmes. He would forgive the government's use of force in January 1994 in light of the cease-fire. Yet, just as he had broken ties with López Portillo, Fuentes took a strong stance against Zedillo when the latter decided to re-enter the combat zone. As in 1977 when he resigned as ambassador to France, Fuentes's protest had additional weight due to his earlier endorsement for the regime. Fuentes would allow some leeway to both López Portillo and Zedillo, but it would always be within strict ethical limits.

Poniatowska and Monsiváis also stayed true to their convictions of 1968. Unlike Paz and Fuentes, the two consistently remained aloof from those in power. Consequently neither had direct political influence; although had Cárdenas won the 1988 election, Monsiváis would have been ideally placed to do so. Their strength lies in their links with civil society; their commitment to the causes they support and their work with those who live on the margins of Mexican society have forged solid affiliations with contemporary developments. Monsiváis and Poniatowska were alongside the students at the vanguard of political change in 1968, and adopted a similar position by attending the CND in 1994.

Although their beliefs have not undergone personal transformations, the four writers who were so unified in their condemnation of the government in 1968 held different political views in 1994; Paz and Fuentes were adversaries. Yet each one would argue that his or her political stance had not altered; moreover all maintained that their goal was democracy. 1968 to 1995 was a crucial time in Mexican political and social development. Did these four writers correctly judge, and accurately portray, what was happening? In September 1968 Monsiváis wrote that he hoped the return to “normalidad académica” would become “el combate permanente por la democratización del país”, and that the Student Movement would mark the beginning of popular participation in Mexican political life.⁸ The following year Fuentes noted, “la gente está aprendiendo a asumir sus responsabilidades personales.”⁹ In 1993 Monsiváis claimed, “[en 1968] nos veíamos como miembros de la sociedad civil (un término entonces inutilizable)”.¹⁰ Fuentes reflected that 1968 was “un bautismo de sangre, de la sociedad civil mexicana [...] así se inicia algo muy, muy importante [...] como alternativa a los poderes centrales y autoritarios en México”.¹¹ Monsiváis recognised that rather than steadily growing, civil society experienced a fluctuating development:

1968 was the beginning of a learning process. We began to learn how to speak, how to think, how to behave. 1994 was a time of synthesising attitudes, and of acting and thinking freely. [...The transformation was] a very slow process, that suddenly crystallised because of the Zapatistas, Colosio's murder, and because of Salinas's corruption.¹²

The hesitant evolution of civil society was advanced by national crises such as the 1985 earthquakes. Government inadequacies forced Mexicans to take responsibility for themselves, and they thus demonstrated their capability and potential power. Monsiváis recorded that on 6 July 1988 civil society used the ballot to achieve a revolution by democratic means. Six years later the Zapatistas offered a central stage to civil society

to propose ways of realising democracy. The collapse of the Mexican economy in 1995 and Salinas's loss of credibility propelled civil society again into the foreground. Castañeda maintained that Monsiváis "played a key role" in this "explosion" of civil society. Monsiváis and other intellectuals, he explained, "were central in encouraging and attempting to define the social protest that began to awaken from the hibernation [...] of authoritarian rule".¹³ In 1998 Monsiváis acknowledged that the Mexican government was obliged to consult civil society. He listed its positive and democratic weapons: "las movilizaciones [...] para contener las decisiones más autoritarias, la información, el voto, [...] la crítica, la organización comunitaria, la defensa de los intereses de gremios y minorías."¹⁴ Monsiváis and Poniatowska worked to coordinate this potential, strengthening and sustaining civil society as it evolved into a force that those in power had to take into consideration.

Paz did not seem to recognise civil society's autonomous potential. He failed to reflect the emergence and demands of civil society when postulating solutions for the Republic as a whole. For Paz, 'democracy' was what he and a few like-minded people deemed to be best for the country, rather than the will of the majority. His faith in his own theories coloured his vision of the 1988 election. Paz reapplied his old remedies to the wounds of Mexican society, judging that Salinas would bring modernity and economic prosperity to the country; circumstances that would result in democratisation. Thus, for different reasons and from opposite political positions, both Paz and Monsiváis saw the 1988 election as the culmination of the struggle that began in 1968. Paz overlooked the rise of civil society; Monsiváis focused on it; Paz applauded Salinas's promises to reform the system; Monsiváis perceived fraud. Initially, Paz appeared to be vindicated: many Mexicans, among them Fuentes, believed there had

been economic and political improvements. The Zapatista rebellion, and the collapse of the peso showed otherwise.

Although Paz and Fuentes shared aspirations for Mexico's future course, and operated in similar ways, they became bitter enemies. As discussed in chapter six, they were, perhaps, too alike and too ambitious to share the same space. There was, however, a vital difference between them: Paz looked for solutions within his own work; Fuentes acknowledged the findings of those with more experience. In his novel *Diana*, Fuentes stated that those who wrote the great books of Tlatelolco also spoke for him. Likewise, Fuentes did not directly address the earthquakes and the consequent growth of civil society. Yet, as stated in *Cristóbal Nonato*, he endorsed the interpretations of Monsiváis and Poniatowska.¹⁵ Fuentes took the changes of society and the views of others into account when making his analyses of Mexican affairs. By exclusively focusing on his own studies, Paz limited his vision of national concerns. He failed to perceive that a significant proportion of the population had outgrown the need for a paternal State and wanted more of a say in decision making.

Yet history would absolve Paz. Nicola Miller concluded "it was those who sought to maintain their role as independent, critical intellectuals committed to reasoned debate and enquiry whose ideas enjoyed lasting influence".¹⁶ Paz's independence and tolerance may have been increasingly questioned, but his output was so great and broad that he overcame his critics. His influence will endure; he would, after all, be given a last word. After Paz's death, Monsiváis summed up his political contribution: "Apoyó a diversos gobiernos, y en otro momento criticó de frente, de un modo extraordinario, [...] y finalmente creyó en la política económica y democrática de Carlos Salinas. [...]"

Era] un intelectual con una trayectoria firme la mayor parte de las veces y [...] errónea por momentos.”¹⁷ Paz’s reputation was built upon years of critical comment: some of his opinions could and would be ‘lost’ in the wealth of his long career. If in the end he supported the ruling party, he had opposed it at crucial points in the past; notably in 1968 when the resonance of his anti-government stance was much appreciated by those involved.

In 1986, Monsiváis wrote of the separation between intellectuals and the masses and suggested it was a deliberate State plot: politicians feared that knowledge would empower the public.¹⁸ Although both Monsiváis and Poniatowska refused the title “intellectual”, by taking up popular issues and bringing them into the intellectual arena, they have been instrumental in bridging this gap. They responded to events that moved them; reporting on the plight of the underdogs to increase public support. They thus acted as interpreters, putting their point of view, and those whose causes they addressed, to other sectors of society. While they did not lead the movements, they used their skills to publicise what they believed to be a lack of justice in Mexican society, whether it be students injured, imprisoned, or killed; casualties of natural disaster left to fend for themselves; citizens denied voting rights; or victims of racial discrimination. They worked as journalists, but theirs was more than a passing concern. By reacting to the changes in society, voicing the outrage of others, and adding their own indignation, they ensured maximum impact.

It would seem that those they sought to represent were satisfied. Monsiváis’s and Poniatowska’s undisputed popularity is a tribute to their contribution. As the case of Luis González de Alba shows, the few who did complain tended to dispute who had

been quoted rather than what was said. In November 1997 Poniowska resigned from the Consejo Editorial of *Nexos* following the publication of an article in which she was accused of plagiarism. González de Alba claimed that Poniowska used his material in *La noche de Tlatelolco*. Imprisoned following the Student Movement, in 1970 he asked Poniowska to smuggle out his manuscript from Lecumberri. González de Alba's contention was not that Poniowska "stole" his ideas, but that she attributed his words to someone else.¹⁹ Poniowska's and Monsiváis's connections with the Mexican public were particularly apparent in their coverage of issues arising after the earthquakes. Their popular links have segregated them from those with political power: they were neither consulted by presidents nor ministers. Yet Monsiváis and Poniowska guaranteed that Mexicans were aware of the infringements and violations committed by those in power. Presidents might not acknowledge Monsiváis and Poniowska, but they could not afford to ignore them. Publishing their comments in a variety of newspapers and magazines ensured that Monsiváis and Poniowska reached a wide, representative audience as they worked to encourage democratic change.

From their articles, it is evident that the four writers share a belief in the inter-relationship of specific events. Poniowska and Monsiváis saw the spirit of 1968 in the aftermath of the earthquakes, and Monsiváis drew on its legacy during Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas's 1988 presidential campaign. Paz saw neoliberalism as the culmination of the students' six demands. He continued with this conjecture even after Salinas's policies had turned sour. The Tlatelolco massacre resounds in Fuentes's novels.²⁰ Although Paz tried to deny any connection, the memory of the Student Movement's abrupt and violent end was resurrected in early 1994 and 1995. Poniowska and Fuentes emphasised the sinister precedents of Salinas's and Zedillo's actions.

Although it is unlikely that the "truth" of 2 October 1968 will ever be exposed, the four writers have ensured that the spectre of Tlatelolco has returned to haunt successive PRI governments. Although he would never admit any responsibility, President Echeverría, strongly encouraged by Fuentes and Paz, sought to make amends by incorporating democratic notions into his policies. Towards the end of his term of office, Echeverría showed another facet of his nature when he moved to censor *Excélsior*. The episode, however, had the adverse effect of opening up the Mexican press: several critical newspapers and magazines were born in *Excélsior*'s wake. Public opinion, articulated in this freer press, forced Díaz Ordaz to stand down after López Portillo selected him as Ambassador to Spain. In the aftermath of the earthquakes, the contrast between the established media and the more recent publications was evident from the reaction to Poniatowska's articles: *Novedades* refused to accept work that displayed an anti-government tone, whereas *La Jornada* and *Proceso* welcomed her contributions. In 1988, Monsiváis used the same outlets to highlight the smear campaign against Cárdenas, and to promote his presidential campaign. After the result was announced, protestations of fraud, derogatory comments about president-elect Salinas, and announcements of mass anti-government demonstrations appeared in the critical press. Times had changed, official atrocities might continue, but they could no longer be hidden from the public gaze. This was particularly apparent in 1994, when Marcos deliberately used the media to sustain the Zapatistas' cause. Intellectuals and writers helped to articulate public concern about political, economic and racial injustice in Mexico, and transformed presidential policy. In the words of Poniatowska: "I believe that one of the greatest victories for intellectuals was in 1994 when Salinas stopped the war against the Zapatistas and stopped bombing Chiapas. This was a victory for the people who took to the streets."²¹ Although the cease-fire was not in itself a conclusion,

and indeed would be broken by Zedillo, it paved the way for the conflict to be transferred to the pages of the liberal press. The fighting stopped, but the reasons that led to it remained in the public domain.

In 1994 Salinas justified deploying troops to Chiapas by accusing the rebels of being anti-Mexican. Monsiváis noted that Díaz Ordaz used the same charge in 1968;²² but saw little similarity between the two presidents:

Salinas had to deny his words, [...] Díaz Ordaz never went back, he was always the same. Salinas changed a lot; he was trying to satisfy international opinion and Díaz Ordaz couldn't care less. Díaz Ordaz was a chauvinistic stone and Salinas was an international opportunist. [...] It was impossible for Salinas to oppose international opinion. He had to accept that people everywhere were supporting the Zapatistas and so he changed his mind on all sides. And Díaz Ordaz **never**.²³

In 1968 international protests to Díaz Ordaz, including those articulated by Fuentes, were ignored. Salinas, however, was forced to be flexible. The timing of the Zapatistas' rebellion was crucial. The TLC compelled Salinas to heed international opinion, and provided the ideal opportunity for Mexican writers to persuade Salinas to modify his strategy. In February 1995, public opinion demanded a second withdrawal from the conflict zone. Whatever his instincts might have been, Zedillo was restrained by the will of civil society.

The repression of 1968 took place behind closed doors: an intimidated press generally obeyed the official line. In 1988 the PRI was able to withstand charges of widespread fraud to retain presidential power. Salinas's popular economic policies served as a screen for the way in which he had come to office. At the end of 1995, with Salinas discredited, and the economy in ruins, Zedillo proclaimed that effective electoral

reform, so long advocated by the four writers, would finally be realised.²⁴ At the mid-term elections of 1997, the PRI lost control of the House of Representatives. The PRD had a landslide victory in Mexico City, and Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas was elected mayor. On 2 July 2000, Mexicans voted in favour of the PAN presidential candidate Vicente Fox. Hours later, the PRI conceded defeat; its sixty-one year rule was over. Civil society, public opinion and the collapse of the old order compelled Zedillo to take the democratic steps that made this transfer of power possible: a process that had begun when the voting age was lowered to eighteen for the 1970 election. The dream for democratic change has been reflected in the critical consciences of writers such as Paz, Fuentes, Poniatowska and Monsiváis. Through their work the hopes, aspirations, setbacks and tragedies of a nation's progress towards democracy can be traced. With different effects and by working in separate spheres, they have ensured that issues and concerns of national importance are voiced, and stay, in the public arena. In 1979, Paz described the Mexican State as a philanthropic ogre. If Paz is correct that the ogre may modify its public image, but retains its inner strength, its subjects have needed to adopt a series of strategies to respond to the capriciousness of its mood. At times cooperating, persuading and cajoling, at others in open opposition, these four leading cultural figures have employed their talents to help cultivate and sustain an atmosphere that restricts the ogre's instincts.

Notes to conclusion

- ¹ Ochoa, "Fuentes", p.5.
- ² Castañeda, *Utopia Unarmed*, p.197.
- ³ Vega, "Celebró los 20 años /II", p.39.
- ⁴ Ochoa Sandy, "Coloquio: Las relaciones", p.53.
- ⁵ Paz, "Cartas sobre la mesa", p.8.
- ⁶ Granados Chapa, "Plaza dominical", p.4.
- ⁷ Wetz, "Entrevista con Paz", 1968, reproduced in *Proceso*, 25 Sept. 1995, pp.16, 18.
- ⁸ Monsiváis, "Puntos de vista", p.xvi.
- ⁹ Ochoa, "Fuentes", p.5.
- ¹⁰ Monsiváis, "Intelectuales y artistas", p.3.
- ¹¹ Fernández, "Carlos Fuentes", p.15.
- ¹² Brewster, Interview with Monsiváis, 1996.
- ¹³ Castañeda, *Utopia Unarmed*, p.197.
- ¹⁴ Armando Ponce, "La implacable crítica de Monsiváis en defensa de una sociedad 'sacrificada'", *Proceso*, No.1123, 10 May 1998, p.16.
- ¹⁵ Fuentes, *Diana*, p.65; Fuentes, *Cristóbal Nonato*, pp.48-49.
- ¹⁶ Miller, *In the Shadow of the State*, p.248.
- ¹⁷ Monsiváis quoted by Adolfo Durán, "Tenemos una clase política de tercer orden y problemas de primer orden: Monsiváis", *Síntesis*, No.2159, 29 May 1998, p.C2.
- ¹⁸ Monsiváis, "Aquí y ahora", pp.15-16.
- ¹⁹ See, Luis González de Alba, "Para limpiar la memoria", *Nexos*, No.238, Oct. 1997, pp.45-49. Elena Poniatowska, "Renuncia al Consejo Editorial de *Nexos*", *Nexos*, No.239, Nov. 1997, p.75; Raúl Álvarez Garín, "68: Dos aclaraciones", *Nexos*, No.239, Nov. 1997, pp.73-77. I would like to thank Celia Wu Brading for drawing my attention to González de Alba's article. *La Jornada*'s response reveals the high esteem in which its editors hold Poniatowska. González de Alba, who wrote a weekly column for the paper, stated that *La Jornada* neither published his views nor letters of support for him, and that the affair was used as an excuse to end his contract. See, Luis González de Alba, "Solución civilizada", *Nexos*, No.245, May 1998, pp.103-104. It is surprising is that González de Alba waited so long to make the charge. Both Poniatowska's and González de Alba's books were published in 1971.
- ²⁰ In *Cristóbal Nonato*, for example, Fuentes explained that the narrator's father, Angel, was conceived on the night of 2 October 1968. It was an act of rebellion against a government that killed Mexico's youth. As discussed in chapter two, Fuentes recalled the latter years of Díaz Ordaz's presidency in *Diana, o la cazadora solitaria*.
- ²¹ Brewster, Interview with Poniatowska, 1996.
- ²² Carlos Monsiváis, "No con un sollozo", p.735.
- ²³ Brewster, Interview with Monsiváis, 1996.
- ²⁴ Handelman, *Mexican Politics*, p.5.

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